

Reading Matters

Edited by Ulrich Marzolph

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Ulrich Marzolph (Ed.)

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An Unfestschrift for
Regina Bendix

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Preface

Ulrich Marzolph

The present Unfestschrift is a special gift for a special colleague and friend. In contrast to the frequent genre of the regular Festschrift, defined as "a collection of writings published in honour of a scholar" (OED), Unfestschrifts are comparatively rare and their exact nature eludes a clear definition. As the prefix "un" means "not," an Unfestschrift is obviously intended to be not a Festschrift, not a jubilee volume, not a collection of contributions written to honor the dedicatee's achievements—or maybe an Unfestschrift simply is a Festschrift that pretends to be none?

When celebrating her sixtieth birthday in May 2018, Regina Bendix, the special colleague and friend to whom the present volume is presented, made it explicitly known to everybody who wanted to know that she did not wish anyone to engage in organizing and publishing a Festschrift for her sixty-fifth birthday, as academic ritual would often have it. Taking note of her pronounced wish, Birgit Abels and myself, and eventually a steadily growing group of colleagues and friends decided not to let her get away with this so easily, and it fell to the present editor to bring this plan to fruition. The difficult task was on the one hand not to disrespect Regina's explicit wish while on the other giving colleagues, students, and friends an opportunity to express their esteem for Regina's inspiration, cooperation, leadership, and friendship in an adequate and lasting manner. Conceiving a jubilee volume that is not a Festschrift, the present editor developed a special design. Instead of arranging the usual array of scholarly writings focusing on a more or less clearly outlined topic that is often conceived as a graveyard of scholarship, I invited the contributors to honor the dedicatee by sharing with her concise and focused "readings" that are hoped to entertain and inspire her and thus repay her intellectually for everything she has given to so many people over the many decades of her life and academic career.

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The title of the present Unfestschrift, *Reading Matters*, is as close as possible to an English equivalent of the beautiful German double entendre *Erlesenes* (meaning both "something read/a reading" and "something exquisite"). Presenting "matters for reading," the Unfestschrift unites short contributions about "readings" that "mattered" in some way or another for the contributors, readings that had an impact on their understanding of whatever they were at some time or presently are interested in. The term "readings" is understood widely. Since most of the invited contributors are academics, the term implies, in the first place, readings of an academic or scholarly nature. In a wider notion, however, "readings" also refer to any other piece of literature, the perception of a piece of art (a painting, a sculpture, a performance), listening to music, appreciating a "folkloric" performance or a fieldwork experience, or just anything else whose "reading" or individual perception has been meaningful for the contributors in different ways. Contrary to a strictly scholarly treatment of a given topic in which the author often disappears behind the subject, the presentations unveil and highlight the contributor's personal involvement, and thus a dimension of crucial importance for ethnographers such as the dedicatee. Outlining the content of the prospective contributions, the invitation to participate in this Unfestschrift went together with a style sheet (for whose compulsiveness the fact that I worked for most of my professional career as an editor might serve as an excuse) specifying that contributions were expected to keep within a certain limit, strictly avoiding footnotes (although footnotes, and particularly digressive ones, at times serve to season the text with a special flavor), and supplying a limited bibliography of "Works Cited." Direct praise of Regina or her work were to be avoided. In order to further inform the contributors about my expectations, I initially distributed my own modest contribution as a sample.

The invitation was sent to (almost) each and everybody of Regina's colleagues, students, friends, and family whose "reading" she might value. For various reasons, not all of those invited were able to contribute. Even so, the response to my invitation was overwhelming, and the present collection of 68 short essays, probably many more than any usual Festschrift would comprise, serves to document Regina's exceptionally rich personal and scholarly network.

As this is a preface for an Unfestschrift, i.e. a volume whose contributors do not celebrate the dedicatee but rather express their esteem and admiration by presenting a highly personal gift, I have to refrain from assessing Regina's scholarly career in detail. So this is not the place to elaborate on her multinational background, from her birth and early education in Switzerland, her subsequent education and early career in the US, and her position as Professor of Cultural Anthropology/European Ethnology at the Georg-August-University in Göttingen that she holds since 2001. I must refrain from mentioning the various stages of her education, from her initial studies in Folkloristics ("Volkskunde"), Linguistics, and Ethnology at the University of Zurich, following which she migrated to the US in 1980 where she acquired a B.A. in Folklore at the University of California in Berkeley in 1982, an M.A. in Folklore at the University of Indiana in Bloomington in 1984, and a Ph.D. in

Folklore at the same institution in 1987. The positions she held at various institutions must equally be left unmentioned: as Lecturer at Indiana University (1983–85); as Visiting Assistant Professor at the Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and the University of California in Berkeley (1988–91); as Assistant Professor of Folklore and Folklife (1993–99) and subsequently as Associate Professor of Folklore and Anthropology (1999–2001) at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, following which she accepted the position as Professor of "Volkskunde" in Göttingen in 2001 (where one of her first initiatives was to rename the institute). If I were allowed to indulge in celebrating her numerous other positions and honors, I might mention her position as president of the Société International d'Ethnologie et de Folklore (SIEF; 2001–8), her election as a Folklore Fellow of the Academia Scientiarum Fennica in 2002, her election as an honorary member of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society in 2005, her position as Director of the Center for Theories and Methods of the Humanities in Göttingen (2008–12), or her membership in the International Advisory Board of the Meertens Institute in Amsterdam in 2009, not to mention her positions as co-editor of the journal "Ethnologia Europaea" (2007–15), as founding co-editor of "Narrative Culture" (together with myself; since 2014), and as co-editor of the "Zeitschrift für Volkskunde" (since 2020).

If one were permitted to celebrate Regina's achievements, this would also have to include mention of the numerous theses she supervised in both the US and Germany and a great variety of research projects she conducted, at any rate too many to list here. Her research interests encompass the history of the fields of folklore and cultural anthropology; economics, politics, and culture, particularly in the areas of tourism and cultural heritage; communication and folk narrative studies; ritual, customs, and theater; the cultural dimension of the senses; culinary studies; and school culture. In all of these fields, she published substantial contributions, from *Backstage Domains: Playing Wilhelm Tell in Two Swiss Communities* (1989) via *Amerikanische Folkloristik: Eine Einführung* (1995) and her often cited *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies* (1997) to the edited volume *A Companion to Folklore* (together with Galit Hasan-Rokem; 2012), the edited volume *Politische Mahlzeiten/Political Meals* (together with Michaela Fenske; 2014), and the monograph study *Sustaining Interdisciplinary Collaboration: A Guide for the Academy* (together with Kilian Bizer and Dorothy Noyes; 2017), and many more. A selection of her pertinent essays was published as *Culture and Value: Tourism, Heritage, and Property* (2018). The present editor is particularly indebted to Regina for editing, together with Dorothy Noyes, my two-volume Festschrift *Terra ridens—terra narrans* (2018), and it is my special pleasure to redeem her kindness by offering this Unfestschrift in return. But all of this has to be left unsaid, so as not to embarrass Regina by disregarding her explicit wish not to be honored.

For the same reason, I have to refrain from praising Regina as the energetic colleague and impartial friend she has been for many years. This dimension is aptly acknowledged by the wide range of international contributors to this volume, all of

whom regarded it as a pleasurable enticement to be involved and all of whom made a particular effort to diligently comply with the editor's slightly prescriptive vision. The result of their joint efforts is a pocket library of readings, of personal experiences, observations, and visions, each of which deals with a special meaningful feature, and all of which together barely suffice to serve as an adequate gift in return for everything Regina has relentlessly given to so many of us, often stressing her own capacities to the maximum and always striving to achieve the best of results. But I had better come to an end here, before readers charge my wording as resulting from my professional deformation of overidentifying with the rich and flowery language of some of the pre-modern Middle Eastern literary sources I study.

Last not least it is my special pleasure to thank the contributors for their inspiring efforts. I am grateful to the Göttingen University Press for accepting to publish this volume and and sincerely appreciate the efforts of Jutta Pabst for seeing the book through the press. May the present readings of literature and various other cultural products and phenomena bring as much pleasure to Regina and the book's other readers as it did when entertaining and instructing the editor.

Patent Ochsner, “Guet Nacht, Elisabeth”

Birgit Abels

oh, guet nacht, Elisabeth – schlaf wohl & tröim süess
es chunnt e nöie morge & nes häuers liecht
(Patent Ochsner, *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth*)

Songwriting is not least about dispelling the ghosts that haunt you, says Büne Huber. It is a creative process allowing you “to look right into the dragon’s mouth” (“*dem Drachen ’id Schnurre luege*”) because it enables you to “grasp this world” to begin with (Huber in Amstutz 2015). As you write a song, you sense where it hurts, Huber suggests; as you put your finger on that aching spot you have found, the song manifests; and, as it emerges, it enables you to reach beyond the anxieties and insecurities that kept you from facing your fears, thus leading you to something intensely essential (and essentially intense). In this way, to him, songwriting can make the world more palpable (“*erfassbar*,” ibid.) and hospitable. The dragon, all of a sudden, appears less of a frightening creature and more of a co-dweller.

Huber is the front man and lead singer for Bern-based Patent Ochsner, arguably one of Switzerland’s most popular rock bands since the early 1990s. His musings about dragons and songwriting are from a 2015 interview about the band’s *The Rimini Flashdown* trilogy (Huber and Amstutz 2015). Specifically, Huber is reflecting here on his writing process of the song *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* (“Good Night, Elisabeth”), which first appeared in part II of the trilogy, the 2012 album *Johnny*. I vividly recall how I first listened to the song during a morning run on a bright spring morning in April 2015.

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> das isch die chauti Sophie, wo da vor dr türe schteit. wär weiss, öb die je wieder geit. leg di warm a! & das hie isch die grossi chischte, wo mir hei umetreit. viu z schwär für eine allei. sogar viu z schwär für beidi. & das hie isch dr sack mit de souvenir & das hie isch dr sack mit de schwarzwys-sfoto. die meischte sy unscharf ♕ oh, guet nacht, Elisabeth – la mi los! la mi gah & la mi zieh & la mi furt vo hie. oh, guet nacht, Elisabeth – schlaf wohl & tröim süess, es chunnt e nöie morge & nes häuers liecht. eis für di & eis für mi. & lanis när vergässe, was isch gsi ♕ & das hie si die dicke muure. I ha se ganz alleini bout. weiss gar nümm wie & wieso. die si plötzlech eifach da gsi. die aute platte, die aute lieder, die aute gschichte, die aute büecher, die aute biuder, die aute farbe, die aute kämpf & die aute narbe. Elisabeth, dä sack mit dene souvenir isch so viu z gross & z schwär für mi. I la ne da la schtah. I la ne da, I la ne da, wenn I gah ♕ das isch die chauti Sophie, wo da vor dr türe schteit. wär weiss, öb die je wieder geit. leg di warm a!

A good minute into the song, after the first refrain, I jumped to the conclusion that the song must be an unlikely homage, both musically and lyrically, to a song that had occupied a special place in my own listening biography since the mid-1990s, the Counting Crows' "Good Night, Elisabeth." Over time, I have come to realize that the two songs may not have anything to do with one another at all; also, I have not come across any mentions, Huber's or anyone else's, of a connection between them. But that is how I 'read' this Patent Ochsner song when I first listened to it, and that is how it 'mattered' to me at that moment: Not only in and of itself, but also in its apparent connection with my previous listening experiences. At the time, I was already knee-deep in what continues to be one of my primary intellectual projects, i.e., the exploration of music(-making) as an atmospheric practice. I recall thinking, on that sunny April morning, that perhaps this is how we live with our personal listening biographies: By allowing musical atmospheres to create experiential resonances between the various layers through which our becoming unfolds.

Those experiential resonances were quite tangible for me that morning. Listening to *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* for the first time, a part of me was transported back in time to that first listening moment I had with the Counting Crows' *Good Night, Elisabeth* back in late 1996. As the listening me was running past Göttingen's canola fields, I could feel the cobalt blueness of the worn-out carpet of my old apartment in another place and time. I could sense (to a lesser degree, see) the night view from the high-rise building's window of that place some twenty years ago, and I could feel my body aching from working at two jobs that day (one of them in a record store, which is also where I had picked up *Recovering the Satellites*, the album that had *Good Night, Elisabeth* on it, that same day). But, at the same time, there I was, out in the sun, twenty years later, after a somewhat decent night's sleep and listening to a different song. In evoking not only those memories but also that kind of felt-bodily remembrance, my first listen to *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* connected

unlikely dots for me that morning. It merged different times, spaces, and states of mind, creating a musical situation of temporal, spatial and emotional layered complexity: A situation "both/and also" (Soja 1996) in many ways. The listening experience was taking place here as well as there, then as well as now. It made me feel in different ways simultaneously, ways conflicting with one another, yet, decidedly belonging together. This is how atmospheres work: They do not point to how things presumably 'are;' instead, they refer you to how times, places, and intensities relate, and to the meaningfulness inherent in that complex relationship. They have their own temporality, their own spatiality and their own way of summoning up meaningfulness. Today, I would refer to a moment like this as an instance of atmospheric dwelling (Abels 2019), a situation where one's being in and relating to the world becomes meaningful in its atmospheric affectivity. It was a somewhat banal and certainly personal listening moment. But it was also one without which my work would probably have followed a different trajectory.

Guet Nacht, Elisabeth is a 4'56"-long rock ballad in d-minor, classic in both form and structure to the extent that it includes a Hammond organ solo just where you would expect it. Huber has described the song as autobiographic, reminiscing the eve of his moving out of his parents' house. His father had had an accident two years earlier which had left him mentally and physically handicapped. Huber and his mother, Elisabeth, had shared his father's care work, but with Huber leaving, his mother was going to have to bear this burden by herself. He recollects hearing his mother cry in the room next door at the prospect of her son leaving her alone in this situation. At that moment, he felt unable to comfort her. *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* captures the feelings of guilt he had that night but was unable to express at the time (Huber and Hönle 2013); an apology, perhaps a bit of an explanation in hindsight, but primarily a conscious act of reconciliation not so much with his mother as with this hurtful moment--at a time in his own life when he was preparing for his own daughter to leave his house (Huber n.d.). The video clip of the song (Patent Ochsner 2012) has Huber mostly sitting at the grand piano in what appears to be his home, with other members of Patent Ochsner casually hanging out with their musical instruments all over the room. The light is dim, candles illuminate the room with a warm and cozy light. In this intimate setting, the camera offers ample face footage of Huber performing, zooming in and out from different angles. We get to watch him feel all the feels from up close.

One detail I want to point out here, for obvious reasons, is the atmospheric interaction between the music, Huber's vocal timbre, and the lyrics. The fact that Patent Ochsner sing in *mundart* (dialect) is central to the atmospheric efficacy of the song. Such efficacy generally interacts with the listener's linguistic positionality and, therefore, works potentially across a whole range of individual affective possibilities. Like all Patent Ochsner lyrics, the words of *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* are in Bärndütsch, the Bernese dialect of Swiss German. *Dialektrock* or *Mundartrock* (dialect rock [music]), as it is often referred to in Switzerland, has seen a boom throughout the Alpine region since the 1990s. In Switzerland, Bern has been one of the hotspots

of this trend, with Züri West, Stiller Has and Gölä, among others, rising to fame roughly around the same time as Patent Ochsner. When, in January 2021, Patent Ochsner received one of the Swiss Music Awards, the Swiss music industry's most prestigious prize, for their lifework, the commendation explicitly referred to Huber's "expressive and poetic Bernese German" as a central means by which the band creates their "unrecognizable Patent Ochsner sound: melancholic, melodic, human" (Swissinfo.ch 2021). Bern-based daily newspaper *Der Bund* even called Huber a charismatic figure ("*Charaktergrind*," Hubschmid 2016) who, "with his straightforward Bernese mouth" ("*mit seiner fadengeraden Berner Schnurre*," ibid.) fills the gap left by sorely missed leading figures in the arts ("*Kulturköpfe*"), such as Max Frisch, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, or Bernhard Luginbühl. If you browse the user comments on Patent Ochsner uploads on YouTube and similar platforms, you will regularly come across references to the Bernese dialect as constitutive to the band's signature sound.

It is perhaps no coincidence, then, that Huber switched from the standard German in which he was conducting the interview to Bärndütsch when he said that writing *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* was a strategy of looking right into the dragon's mouth in order to capture the deeply personal quality of his songwriting experience. Both anthropologists and linguists would probably quote habitual belonging and social intimacy to explain the indexical qualities of such code-switching. These are certainly relevant categories. But they do not capture what that moment in the middle of Göttingen's canola fields in 2015 pointed me to. From the perspective of atmospheric theory, code-switching acts as a strategic cultural qualification of sonic sensation. Owing to its atmospheric quality, that sensation is both bodily and felt-bodily in nature. It blurs, for culturally attuned bodies, the line between the material and the immaterial, between the sound/music and the physical body, and between sociospatial references and the (felt) body's whereabouts, among other things. Sound has the distinct power to mediate cultural values and ideologies; music is a way of working with that power along culturally qualified frameworks. Listening to *Guet Nacht, Elisabeth* rendered connections that morning in spring between myself and places, spaces, cultural configurations, and personal memories experienceable for me that I would not otherwise have discovered. The song's dialect lyrics, moreover, made these generally vague references more specific, coloring them with the sense of social intimacy distinct to languages and codes shared only among small social groups. Dialect, atmospherically, invites you in; or it uninvites you. Which one it is not only depends on your degree of socialization in and your command, or lack thereof, of that dialect. Instead, it is a matter of felt-bodily attunement. For Patent Ochsner to perform in Bärndütsch, then, is a way of bundling atmospheric energy and, thus, of offering a musical experience of increased intensity (and hence, of heightened vulnerability as well, but that is for another time). Since dialect speakers are often also in full command of standard language, dialect opens up atmospheric possibilities in addition to those standard language offers. It gives you the choice of either embracing the social intimacy it offers or not, and by offering

an alternative option, it also makes your *choice* of belonging felt atmospherically. In multilingual Switzerland, this is the bread and butter of everyday social interaction. It is, then, one thing to sing about new mornings and brighter light; another, to make it "*es chunnt e nöie morge & nes häuers liecht*." And it is yet another to explore the resonant intensity, sonic, emotional and otherwise, between one's various languages, and other frameworks of belonging, in a song.

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The Musical Game Show *Elämäni biisi* (Song of My Life) on Finnish TV

Pertti Anttonen

Elämäni biisi (Song of My Life), produced by Yellow Film & TV, is a highly popular prime-time game show/music entertainment program broadcast live on Saturday evenings by the publicly funded Finnish Broadcasting Company (Yle) in Finland. It won in its second season in 2020 the Golden Venla prize, awarded by the Finnish Television Academy, for the best music entertainment program. It is now one of the most watched programs on the Yle channels. It features guests from various sectors of society, including politicians, scholars and scientists, sportspeople, artists, actors and theatre directors, writers, musicians, dancers, etc. Their task is to bring with them a piece of popular music that is particularly relevant or dear to them, to be performed live in the program, and then narrate what decisive role their chosen piece of music has played in their lives. According to the program description on Yle's online streaming service *Yle Areena* and on the program's own website, the host Katja Ståhl, "will make the evening's guests open their hearts through the power of music" (Yle Areena n.d.; Elämäni 2021).

In the first season of the program in summer 2019, there were four guests in each episode, but later there were five. In the Christmas 2021 episode, the guests were the current Prime Minister Sanna Marin and four former Prime Ministers. The number of viewers was reported to be 954,000 (Helsingin Sanomat 2021), which is about 17% of the country's total population.

The program is structured in two parts. First, top artists and the house band perform a song chosen in advance by each guest as the song of their lives, but the

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guests are instructed not to reveal their choice until it is time to do so. The guests must guess which of them has chosen which song, doing their speculation one song at a time and without knowing the songs that will be played later. The guesses are written on a chart that is completed as the game progresses. In the second part of the program, the guests' original choices are revealed one by one, and each reveal is followed by a narrative in which the guests give autobiographical accounts of their song's significance.

During each song performance, the guests try to interpret each other's gestures and body movements in order to deduce whose song is being played. The guests compete against each other in guessing, but when the correct answer is revealed, the host stops talking about guessing and asks, "who knew?" Points are awarded for each correct guess, which means that in a game of five contestants, the maximum score is four. The winner of the playful contest receives no prize but is praised for being a good player. The loser is the one who does not guess any of the songs correctly. One can also lose by bringing in a song that is easily guessed by everyone. In the Christmas 2021-episode, Prime Minister Marin had chosen a song that all the other guests guessed to be hers, so she commented: "Everyone knew, I was caught, I'm so transparent" (Yle Areena 2021a). In addition to watching the studio guests compete, TV viewers are encouraged to do their own guessing via a mobile phone application developed for the program. Unlike the studio guests, the TV viewers get to listen to all the songs before making their guesses.

It can be easily discerned that the interest the studio guests and the TV viewers take on the program is generated and maintained not only by watching and/or participating in the game, but also by the joviality of the host, the wit of the guessing phase, the surprise of the revelations, the quality of the musical performances, and the impact of the personal narratives. TV viewers are motivated not only by the stories told by the featured public figures, but also by the sense of sharing with them the (recent) history of popular music, both domestic and (mostly) Anglo-American. Although a biographical narrative rests on individual experience, the meanings given to a familiar piece of popular music become collective in the historical experience of the national public sphere—without necessarily invoking discourse on intangible heritage.

I enjoyed watching the program live in its third season, but I do not consider myself a fan. What interests me in the show is not the guessing game or the music performed, but the stories that reflect on the affects of music and social meanings. The narrative accounts of the links between personal life and popular music parallel ethnologists' studies of the social and personal meanings of places and objects.

I find the program interestingly reflective of the current trend towards narrativity, even if the program does not define the story or the narrative in terms of genre or form. In practical terms, a story in this program means the telling of a recollection, a memory, and the justification of its meaning in a way that distinguishes time, place, and sequences of events, contextualized to the moment of narration and its argumentative aims. Since no explicit criteria are given for a

story, almost any narrative, memory or reminiscence will do. In the first season of the program, the host made story-forming and story-telling both appealing and formulaic by offering affective imagery as examples: "What song gives you chills? Which song brings tears to your eyes? Which song could you dance to forever? What song do you hum when you're happy? Which song takes you back to your childhood? Which song do you play at full volume when you're alone?"

Despite such prompts towards affectivity, many of the stories presented in the program focus on experiencing music as a partner to life choices. Songs relate to long-term marriages or the end of a relationship, stories of growing up, the beginning or early signs of a professional career or identity, finding encouragement in challenging situations in life, or dealing with anger management issues. The ethos of storytelling is not present as a concept, but the stories linked to the selected music pieces are often success stories, stories of gratitude, and stories of empowerment.

While some of the stories may be regarded as somewhat shallow, others are strikingly confessional for an entertainment context. Violinist Linda Lampenius, internationally also known as Linda Brava, rationalized her choice of Robbie Williams' song *Feel* by talking about her experiences as a victim of sexual harassment and financial blackmailing by the Canadian, Finnish-born businessman Peter Nygård, focusing on her attempts at protecting her mother with substance abuse problems from the press coverage of the dramatic events. Conductor and clarinetist Eero Lehtimäki gave out his thoughts on the song *Who Wants to Live Forever* by the Queen and the pursuit of eternal life in the arts. His reflections concerned his own workaholism, which led him to focus on advancing his career at the expense of his own well-being and social relationships. Alf Rehn, Professor of Innovation, Design, and Management at the University of Southern Denmark described his experiences as an internationally successful professor amidst depression and mental health difficulties. Édith Piaf's *Milord* kept him alive and going, even though he found it difficult to get out of bed.

Paola Suhonen, internationally known designer behind the *Ivana Helsinki* clothing brand, told a fan story about her relationship to the country-rock singer Gram Parsons. Suhonen became interested in Parsons after moving to New York in 2008 and meeting songwriter Chip Taylor, who told her stories about Parsons, who died in September 1973 at the age of 26. Suhonen said that for the first time in her life she got a "total fan girl flash," dug up all the information she could get about Parsons and was hooked into a long-distance love relationship with a person long deceased. Suhonen said that she was obsessed with the idea of sleeping in Parsons' deathbed at the Joshua Tree Inn in California's Joshua Tree National Park. She was holding in her hand the hotel key from Parsons' room as a souvenir from her stay at the inn. She also said that she was wearing a dress that is part of her clothing collection entitled *This is for you Gram*. She had chosen Parsons' song *Love Hurts*, originally recorded by the Everly Brothers in 1960 and included on Parsons' LP *Grievous Angel*, released after his death in January 1974. She did not explicate the reason for selecting this song, but she added that through this experience she

discovered music and ventured into songwriting herself. She summed up her narrative by saying that it involves strong artistic inspiration and makes a great love story (Yle Areena 2019).

According to the host, the narratives told in the program change the way in which the viewers hear the songs later, but this is probably only true in the sense that they may remember that such and such guests experienced certain things in their life in relation to the song. The personal life experiences and life choices that the guests narrate about do not necessarily bring new insights or perspectives into the song in question. The narratives are usually not about a particular interpretation of the song, but about the history of the song in the narrator's own life.

Anna Kontula, Doctor of Social Sciences and Left Alliance member of Parliament provided an exception to this in an episode broadcast live in September 2021. She spoke not about herself but about the song she had chosen, and in this way sought to instruct others in understanding the song. The song in question was composed by Kaj Chydenius to a poem written by Marja-Leena Mikkola in 1976, entitled *Tyttö ja tanssiva karhu* (The Girl and the Dancing Bear). In an article on the Yle website, this song is described as "a folk ballad-like, multilevel song about love, the world, life, dreams, and art" (Yle 2014). When the host asked Kontula at the beginning of the episode on what grounds she had chosen her song, Kontula replied with a cryptic hint that the song helped her understand Wittgenstein. Consequently, the other contestants searched for hints of Wittgenstein in all the songs they heard in that episode (to no avail).

After the song was performed and Kontula's name was revealed as the song's selector, the host asked her about the story behind the song. Kontula replied: "There's no story here, there's an insight" (Yle Areena 2021b). This insight was about the difference between narrative and life. Kontula noted that life is often told from beginning to end as if it were a thread of life, but "in reality, life is a big basket full of threads of different length that are tangled together." According to Kontula, the song does not really have a story, because it consists of several story halves. Wittgenstein wrote that whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent, and this song "in my opinion beautifully shows why we cannot really say truths about life, but we always tell lies, half-truths, stories." The host described Kontula's story performance as an "unnarrative."

However, Kontula's performance can also be seen as a narrative, because she put her insight into a temporal-spatial frame. When she first heard the song, she was sitting on the backseat of a Lada "with her comrades" who had "an illegal copy of the song on a C cassette." But instead of describing her life situation or her relationship to these "comrades," she described the insight the song evoked: life or truth cannot be put into words. For Kontula, the relationship between the piece of music and the insight it evoked was more important as a narrative than how her life has taken shape as a result of that insight. For many other guests in the program, however, it is precisely the change in one's course of life as a result of influence from a piece of music that is inspiring and worth telling. The program

conventionally builds on the understanding of the concept of meaning as the storyteller's self-interpretation, specifically as the relation between the song and one's personal experience and life history. This narrativized relationship is then presented as a justification of the interpreted meaning, given as a performance of assertion.

A press article about the TV program claims that "the guests tell their stories with the skill of a professional speaker" (Apu 2020). In my opinion, the fact that an entertainment program promoting personal narratives features people who possess the ability to talk about themselves on television does not diminish the program's value even for researchers of oral storytelling. Some of the print media suggested that with the help of this program, "viewers can peep into the lives of well-known Finns through their favorite songs" (Turkulainen 2019). As already mentioned, I am not necessarily a fan of the program, but I do think that vernacular voyeurism in a folk vs. elite setting is not the basis for the program's attraction. For myself at least, the attraction lies in the way in which oral narration is given center stage on prime-time TV, encouraging people to reflect upon their personal history in relation to popular music, its affects, and social meanings. The viewers are bound to ask themselves: if given a chance, what would be my narrative of the song of my life?

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David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country/The Past is a Foreign Country Revisited*

Robert Baron

The Past is a Foreign Country explores perspectives about the past over a broad sweep of history. It pioneered a view of heritage as how the past is constructed in the present that is foundational for the field of heritage studies. It is voluminous and multifaceted in considering affect, values, ideology, benefits and burdens of the past in the present, the play of memory, distinctions between history and heritage and diverse points of view about what should be preserved.

I could never look at concrete the same way after reading *The Past is a Foreign Country*. According to Lowenthal, concrete gets uglier over time, with smoothness turned greasy. It fails to acquire the patina of other building materials in historic structures deemed worthy of preservation due to their beauty and historical resonance. I thought immediately of highway overpasses and bland modernist buildings. Lowenthal's view of concrete came back to me during a visit to Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater in the early 1990s. Built over a waterfall, it is noted for its cantilevered concrete construction and organic relationship to its natural surroundings. A tour guide pointed out exposed rebars, ascribing this deterioration to Wright's lack of expertise and poor judgement about how building materials endure over time. I thought again of Lowenthal on concrete while reading fierce debates about preserving brutalist concrete buildings designed by prominent architects. Architectural historians and aficionados of modern architecture often try to push back against historic preservation laws that restrict designation and protection to buildings of a certain minimum age and argue for the significance and

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aesthetic value of brutalism. Others in the general public view the buildings as ugly, weird, forbidding, and depressing when rain turns concrete grey. The tide began to turn in recent years, especially with the Museum of Modern Art exhibition, *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia 1948–1980*, which drew large audiences and critical praise. I was struck by how these architects worked concrete in dynamic sculptural ways surprising in their plasticity. Their visionary, people friendly buildings featured the use of relatively inexpensive concrete for schools, resorts for the masses, and various kind of public buildings.

My new understandings of concrete affirmed Lowenthal's pathbreaking views of heritage at the same time as it countered his view about how concrete endures and is perceived over time. Lowenthal devotes little attention to modern architecture as heritage, and is at times dismissive of it. Concrete, while it often deteriorates in unsightly ways, is a key component of remarkable brutalist buildings of transcendent beauty and social value now generating revival and preservation.

The shifting perspectives on concrete structures affirm Lowenthal's big ideas about heritage. Heritage is continuously reinterpreted and often contested. What some value as heritage, others disdain. Whether a cultural practice or artifact becomes heritage changes over time—what is once neglected, overlooked or in disfavor becomes prized heritage, but may subsequently fall out of favor. The revised edition of Lowenthal's book allows that while brutalism has been devalued, it may be poised for recognition and preservation, as is indeed now happening with growing respect for this highly contested genre. Noting a narrowing of time depth for objects deemed worthy of preservation, the author expresses surprise that even modernist buildings from the 1990s are now the focus of preservation efforts.

Brutalist architecture illustrates Lowenthal's thesis that perspectives about the past undergo ongoing revision and transformation as they are reshaped to meet new interests, needs, desires, and agendas of individuals and groups. As a foreign country, the past is domesticated in the here and now. We only truly know the present, and the past exists in its residues and in collective and individual memory, which is always selective, fragmented, edited, and transformed. The past also exists in the evidence that is the stuff of historiography. Heritage domesticates through selectively rendering dimensions of the past through preservation, valorization, reinterpretation and celebration.

The term "the past is a foreign country" is attributed to the British novelist L.P. Hartley, who stated that they "do things different there." He wrote in the 1950s about his memory of the early 1900s, viewing it as a time of stability, confidence, and a sense that "all's well with the world"—beliefs that would radically change after World War I (qtd. in Lowenthal 2015: 3). Lowenthal sees the belief that things are done differently in the past as a relatively new phenomenon, since over most of the course of history there was scant differentiation of past from present. He focuses on how the past was domesticated in Europe and North America since the Renaissance. Devoting particular attention to "relics," which encompass various kinds of material culture, he traces how historic preservation and the restoration of

art and artifacts emerged and changed over time. At various times buildings, monuments, paintings, and sculptures are restored to a purportedly original state, retaining the marks of ageing or improved to conform to contemporary aesthetic preferences. These approaches to preservation and restoration may also coexist concurrently. How preservation is approached and what is preserved is also a function of nationalism and other ideologies as well as such responses to modernity as the revival of the medieval in reaction to rapid industrialization in Victorian England.

We live in a time of fierce contestation of heritage. These conflicts are epitomized in controversies about retaining statues of individuals seen as proponents of slavery, colonialism, and racism. Lowenthal provides a framework that enhances our understanding of the removal of these monuments. Through what he characterizes as rectification, revision and the reshaping of the objects of heritage a group makes the past its own. The destruction or removal of statues and monuments embody these processes, as do other initiatives that create a desired past. Revising and rectifying the past embodies changing ideologies that shape and reshape heritage. At the conclusion of the 2015 edition he addresses the removal of the statue of Joe Paterno, a once idolized football coach at Penn State University who accommodated and overlooked sexual abuse by a subordinate. It was among the first of the wave of removals of statues that accelerated in recent years. While for much of the preceding 609 pages of the book he provides multifaceted, kaleidoscopic approaches to heritage while bracketing his own points of view, here he takes an unequivocal stand for interpretation, contextualization, and creating awareness of the lessons of the past. He argues that the statue should have been retained as example of the "transience of fame, the fallibility of repute and the risks of hero worship", with interpretation that speaks to the crimes committed (2015: 610).

Lowenthal is more equivocal about the value of interpretation and contextualization elsewhere in the book. He sees historical markers as valorizing the past and articulating the significance of a site or object. If unmarked through a label then most sites would be unrecognized as historically significant and would not be evocative for visitors. On the other hand, he asserts that markers always alter our experience as they tell us what we are seeing and imply comparison with other sites and objects. They are "ancillary paraphernalia" that "risk eclipsing actual relics" (436), segregating them from their surrounds as they signify that they are a place out of the past.

These views about the distancing and manipulative impact of interpretation and labelling resonate deeply for me in reflecting on my visit to Auschwitz in 1998. A number of members of my family were killed there. I approached my visit with heightened emotions and anxiety. I avoided a guided tour because I wanted a direct, less mediated experience. But I feared that the emotional impact would be unbearable. I took a local train to Oświcim, where the concentration camp is located. The destination sign on the local bus I caught at the station said "museum," which signified an interpretive site. A sign at the entrance building instructed visitors to treat the site with the respect due a place where sad and horrible things happened.

However, the throngs of visitors touring the site affected my mood as I perceived them as people on holiday.

Raw emotions were unleashed for me as I viewed stark barracks that included piles of shoes, human hair, and children's clothing displayed without the distancing effect of detailed interpretive labels. Opposite these barracks stood other barracks devoted to exhibitions by each of a number of countries about their experience of the Holocaust and the populations removed to concentration camps. It was intriguing to view the variety of modes of interpretation and content of these exhibitions. I was impressed by how France and the Netherlands rendered their treatment of the Jews and irritated by the scant discussion of the experience of Jews in Poland's. And I was startled that there were exhibitions by Austria and Italy, given their fascist regimes during World War II (there was no exhibition room for Germany). Experiencing these exhibitions was intellectually absorbing but I felt distanced from the raw emotions and somber reflection I experienced across the way in the buildings with chilling rows of bunks, piles of clothing and hair, and an execution ground for inmates. My last stop was the crematorium. I tried to find a moment of meditation and recited to myself what I remembered of the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead. But my emotions were diluted and displaced by the onrush of tourists passing quickly through this space.

The range of emotions and huge affective load I experienced illustrate the importance of affect, a topic of growing interest for heritage studies. As with so many other aspects of heritage, affect is dealt with extensively in *The Past is Foreign Country*. It is not labelled as such, and is commingled with other dimensions of the experience and construction of heritage, including needs, benefits, burdens, ideology, transformation, ownership, possession, restoration, preservation, and conceptualizations of the past. This book is, at times, diffuse, rambling, digressive, and plagued by purple prose. But the breadth of the scope of this highly ambitious volume contrasts sharply with many far more circumscribed contemporary works of heritage studies.

There are a plethora of examples of affect and emotion relating to the production, experience, embodiment, and understanding of heritage. They could well be compiled and analyzed within a whole new volume. Memories shaping heritage can be "grievous, stifling, menacing and traumatic" (16), or the opposite. Accentuating important achievements of the past, "enhances our self-esteem" (21). Caring for the past brings about "pleasure or disgust, awe or disdain", "hope or despair" (20) about its legacies. "Foreboding of imminent extinction" (28) accelerates preservation initiatives. Nostalgia is a powerful and pervasive driver of heritage awareness, possession and preservation. People crave to possess relics. Ruins evoke melancholia and intimations of mortality.

Reading Lowenthal brought back sensuous dimension of research I carried out in archives with original documents and how a highly evocative historic site evokes a frisson and multiple parts of the sensorium. The "taste, feel and sight that etch relics into memory vividly conjure up their milieus" (390). Original documents

palpably "vivify the thoughts and events they express" (391). Such affective experiences contribute to understanding, demonstrating that affect and cognition should be dealt with integratively in heritage studies.

Rereading Lowenthal enhanced my understanding of how the past is perceived and constructed as heritage while attuning me sharply to my affective response to heritage experiences. I avoided doing book reviews for many years, and when I did agree to reviews in the past ten years I chose books I felt would substantially deepen my understanding of heritage. These books, like *The Past is a Foreign Country* required—and invited—close reading over many weeks.

Midway through my rereading of the first edition I discovered that Lowenthal published an extensively revised and expanded version. I was astonished to see that he was then 92 years old. As a newly septuagenarian scholar I was inspired for pursuing later in life scholarship. It was especially inspiring to see how au courant he was about developments in the study and understanding of heritage. He recognizes that historic preservation and heritage institutions became more inclusive in preserving a much wider range of objects. The rise of intangible heritage safeguarding is briefly noted, with a critique of static approaches that have since been addressed by the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) program. Lowenthal recognizes how the internet and other new media brought about profound changes in how individuals and groups relate to the past and explore their heritage.

Lowenthal laments how past and present are increasingly conflated as the foreign country of the past is thoroughly domesticated, but with a lack of understanding of the "codes," "modes of thought," and "*genres de vie"* (22) of people who lived in the past. In the book's final pages he speaks of an absence of temporal distance, indiscriminate preservation of a vast amount of heritage objects through ultra-fast retrieval of information, and a new ability to allow recovery of nearly every dimension of a person's life that contributes to a diminished understanding of the past. While championing history as providing a systematically documented and consensual rendering of history—albeit with historiographic selectivity and bias—he complains that the discipline is too narrowly specialized. In his concluding thoughtful, if at times jaundiced and curmudgeonly view of how the past and heritage are now experienced, Lowenthal, as ever, provokes us and underscores the significance and complexities of thinking and feeling about heritage.

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Diana Wynne Jones, *Howl's Moving Castle*

Claire Bendix

Diana Wynne Jones (1934–2011) credited the inspiration for *Howl's Moving Castle* (1986) to a boy she met when visiting a school, who asked her to write a book called "The Moving Castle." *Howl's Moving Castle* is set in a fairy-tale kingdom, and tells the story of a young hatmaker called Sophie, who is cursed to be old by the Witch of the Waste, a wizard called Howl (who indeed has a moving castle), and a fire demon called Calcifer. At the time of the book's publication, Diana Wynne Jones was already an established and prolific author known for her *Chrestomanci* stories, a loosely connected series set in an England with magic. Then, in 2004, Hayao Miyazaki of Studio Ghibli released an animated film based on the book and bearing the same title (Miyazaki 2004). The film adaptation has remained popular to this day, and is often said to be one of the best Studio Ghibli films. It continues to inspire commentary on its merits and themes well over a decade after its release. The book is also periodically rediscovered by fans of the film, who are often surprised to learn that Diana Wynne Jones wrote two sequels: *Castle in the Air* (Jones 1990), written relatively soon after *Howl's Moving Castle*, and *House of Many Ways* (Jones 2008), written after the release of the film.

To start with then, there are two different formats, versions of the story, and languages in which someone could encounter *Howl's Moving Castle* for the first time. One of these is in book form, the story as written by Diana Wynne Jones, in English. The other of these is in movie form, the story as told by Hayao Miyazaki, in Japanese. Popular in each format, both have been translated into a myriad of other languages, providing the reader or viewer with different options for experiencing *Howl's Moving Castle*. For me, the many ways in which *Howl's Moving Castle* can be

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encountered highlight questions of originality and translation, cultural and language identity, personal experience and preference, and what makes a work valued.

There is a pervasive and persistent idea that books must be read in the language they were originally written in order for the reader to truly experience the story and understand the author's intention. For those unable to read books in the language they were originally written, which is many of us, there are translations. These make stories from around the world accessible to a wider audience, bringing them to readers who would otherwise not have encountered these stories or been able to appreciate them. Translating stories adds another layer of interpretation, namely that of the translator, who places an author's words into a new language and cultural context. The translator works to capture the author's voice or style, while remaining reasonably accurate, with the ultimate goal of having the translated story read well in the new language and cultural context. Some say that the role of translators in the English literary world began to be more widely discussed with the Russian literature translations of Larissa Volokhonsky and Richard Pevear. Their translations were said to both be more true to the originals than those that came before them, and to be more lively and engaging to read (Hunnewell 2015). The commercial success of their translations led to increased awareness of the work of translators; some English translators of non-English language authors became known by name and achieved their own level of celebrity. This is perhaps most apparent with bestselling authors such as Haruki Murakami. His translators have been featured in numerous interviews and articles, and the business of translating his novels into English has even become the subject of a book (Karashima 2020). As translation does add interpretation, some authors decide to write in other languages themselves to explore the ways in which their storytelling changes. Jhumpa Lahiri is one such author, who after writing in her second language, English, made the switch to writing in a third language, Italian (Lahiri 2016). In her own writing and interviews, she has described the distinct character of each language and how her writing in each language changes.

Translating the books of Diana Wynne Jones, which draw on largely European myths and legends to create layered and complex stories, has been described as exceptionally challenging. An article written by her translator into Hebrew, Gili Bar-Hillel Semo, soon after Jones's death described precisely what made translating Diana Wynne Jones's work so difficult. "Jones was an astonishing virtuoso of the English language," Semo wrote, "she had the habit of weaving into her writing so many cultural references and allusions, that translating her works was a constant process of discovery, delight, and despair: delight at the cleverness of it all, despair at the impossibility of conveying the full complexity of the text in translation" (Semo 2011: 8). Providing examples of some of the issues she encountered when translating *Howl's Moving Castle*, Semo stated, "Literally every book I've worked on of Jones's was fraught with these multiple layers of meaning and allusion" (10). In an interview with Charlie Butler earlier that year, Diana Wynne Jones spoke about translating her stories for Japanese readers. When Butler wondered how her

Japanese readership read her stories, since they were not able to "draw on the same stockpot of myth", Jones responded, "I really don't know, but they seem to enjoy it" (Butler 2011: 5). She went on to say that "all these myths and legends and fairy stories and so forth, even though they're from a foreign source, have been honed into the right kind of shape anyway so that people pick up on them", and then provided examples of the many changes to symbolism and imagery, as well as introduction of Japanese concepts, that translation into Japanese entailed (5).

For viewers of Japanese animation outside of Japan, the topic of language has been debated for decades, a debate abbreviated as "sub vs. dub." The debate centers around whether it is better to watch these films and tv shows in their original language with subtitles in your language (as asserted by those in the sub camp) or in your language with dubbed lines by voice actors (as asserted by those in the dub camp). Those who support the sub approach argue that subbing maintains the original performances and allows for more nuanced appreciation. Those who support the dub approach argue that dubbing makes the viewing experience more immersive and the story and setting more familiar. Proponents of each approach raise similar arguments, stating that their preferred approach is more accurate, more helpful in learning a language, and more accessible to those with disabilities. This debate was thematized in early 2020 in the USA with the awards season success of the Korean language movie *Parasite*, whose director Bong Joon Ho declared himself to be a member of the sub camp. In a widely quoted statement, the director said—in Korean, translated by his interpreter Sharon Choi—"Once you overcome the 1-inch-tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films" (Chang 2020).

As noted by both proponents and detractors of the dubbing practice, dubbing situates a film in a cultural context. For multilingual viewers then, watching a dubbed film in multiple languages can be an entirely different experience. The English language version of the movie *Howl's Moving Castle* was released by the Disney Studios in two formats: a subbed version and a dubbed version. The dubbed version was a large release with a cast of stars for the voice acting, including Christian Bale and Lauren Bacall. These recognizable names were enough for some fans to prefer the English language dub over the Japanese original. In an interview around the release date of the movie, Miyazaki spoke in favor of the dubbed version, and continued: "In any case, he adds, who is to say that a subtitled print is any more authentic? 'When you watch the subtitled version you are probably missing just as many things. There is a layer and a nuance you're not going to get'." (Brooks 2005).

My own first experience of the movie *Howl's Moving Castle* was the German dubbed version. In the second half of the movie, the Witch of the Waste (die Hexe aus dem Niemandsland), who had pursued Howl (Hauru) and cursed Sophie, has been stripped of her powers and her youthful appearance. The witch becomes a wizened old lady, with a face of rolls and folds, only a few teeth, and a big red nose. From her former imposing self, she has become round, squat, and perhaps senile, viewing the world around her with big blue eyes and a faint smile. Sophie takes her

into the moving castle, and as Sophie feeds her gruel, the old witch turns to look at the fire demon Calcifer. Her eyebrows lift, her eyes grow wide and she smiles, "Ein schönes Feuerchen, nicht wahr?" (A lovely little fire, isn't it?) she says to Sophie. The voice sounds devious and elderly and smiling, and the whole situation is encapsulated in this statement. When she had power, she coveted what Calcifer had, and in this reduced version of her former self, using a diminutive word (Feuerchen = little fire) for the powerful demon, she still wants it. When I watched the English dubbed version of the movie, the delivery of this memorable line was absent, and the combination of reduced self and diminutive word was too—the English dub used the bland phrase "pretty fire."

Since the release of the film, there have been multiple comparisons made between book and film. The general consensus seems to be that while the spirit of the two are similar, there are a number of substantial alterations. Fans note the different tones of the stories, the altered storyline, and the changed or missing characters. The relative merits of each have been discussed at length, and the relation between the book author and the film director has been debated. There is an interview with Diana Wynne Jones, which survives in edited snippets on YouTube, that appears to take place soon after the film's release (YouVHS 2010). It is curiously stitched together of only her responses, leaving the modern-day viewer to wonder what her interviewer's questions were. One message, however, is abundantly clear: Diana Wynne Jones very much enjoyed the movie adaptation of her book. She found the animated Calcifer wonderful, she liked that the animated castle had its own distinct threatening and comical personality, and she said that a scene that was only partly in the book was one of the best scenes in the film. Of the Witch of the Waste, who was inspired by a severe aunt of hers, she noted "oddly enough, the way the Witch of the Waste is represented in the film, it looked awfully, awfully like her, even wears the same clothes. I was really taken by that." As for Miyazaki, she had a long conversation with him through an interpreter, and said of this, "He understood my books in a way that nobody else has ever done, it was really quite striking."

At the end of the interview, the interviewer presumably asked her to pick which of the two, book or movie, she liked better or would recommend. Diana Wynne Jones responded, "Well, the book and the film are both to *enjoy*. They are both of them slightly different, but full of fabulous things, and I would like everyone to enjoy it and laugh. And also rejoice about it, really, because it's a wonderful thing."

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The Tiger Did It: *Endeavour* Between Prestige and Pulp

Helen Bendix

"There's two options: Either there's a tiger roaming Oxfordshire, killing people at random, or someone wants us to think there is." (*Endeavour Morse, Prey*)

In *Prey*, episode 3 of season 3 of the murder mystery series *Endeavour*, written by Russell Lewis and directed by Lawrence Gough, the tiger did it. The prequel to classic British detective drama *Morse* and spiritual grandfather to *Morse's* sequel *Lewis*, *Endeavour* follows the adventures of a young Endeavour Morse at the beginning of his career in the police. Morse is an odd fit as a 1960s Oxford policeman. He's too intelligent to fit in with his fellow Constables, too good at his job to be ignored, and anachronistically opposed to the sexism and corruption he continues to expose amongst his colleagues. The show follows intricate murder plots hiding beneath the placid, British exterior of the setting, the complex relationships unfolding between Morse and his colleagues, especially Detective Inspector Fred Thursday and his daughter Joan, as well as the social backdrop of England in the late 1960s. Review aggregator *Rotten Tomatoes* cites this ambitious period drama as having a critic approval rating of 86%. And yet, in episode 3 of season 3, the tiger did it.

As is usual for the show, the episode opens with a series of images of different characters the audience has not seen before interspersed with the opening credits, including a birdwatcher and a scientist. A young, attractive, soon-to-be-missing au pair kisses her boss before bringing his children to school. Once the credits end, Morse is set on her trail, interviewing suspects at the large mansion of the

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Mortmaignes. A body—or rather, part of one—appears in the Thames. A coroner standing in for DeBryn, the show's usual coroner, dismisses the victim's hysterical girlfriend and the fact that his arm has been dismembered from his body and claims the victim drowned. DeBryn returns from his fishing holiday in time to suggest that the severed arm was not caused by a boating incident but rather by a large cat. As the police go on a hunt for the presumed wild animal, Superintendent Bright reminisces about his time in India, when he chased down and killed a man-eating tiger. Midway through the hunt, a further victim appears: the wildlife conservation expert whose children were in the care of the missing au pair. The coroner suggests an escaped large cat from a zoo as the culprit, but because the attacks seem intentional, Morse considers it a murder. Mr. Mortmaigne, owner of the large estate on which this latest attack has taken place, reveals that his family used to keep big cats on the grounds, until one of them mauled his sister. The police press him on whether or not one of the cats might still be in the area. It is at this point—fifty minutes into a ninety-minute episode—that the police reveal there have been attacks on livestock in the area for the last several years by a creature called "the Beast of Binsey" by the locals. This opportunity to contextualize the presence of a tiger in Oxfordshire for years without having drawn significant attention to itself previously is immediately cast aside to delve into the strange family dynamics of the Mortmaignes. Then, the episode takes a twenty-minute detour to depict Inspector Thursday's PTSD from being shot in the previous season and his assault of a suspect in an attempt to close a four-year-old case that is only loosely connected to the tiger. While searching a cottage in the woods for the suspect in said four-year-old case, Morse discovers handkerchiefs smelling of musk. He intuits that Georgina Mortmaigne, the girl who had been mauled by the tiger years previously, had been intentionally provoking the tiger attacks due to unrequited love. The human culprit apprehended, Morse spots the tiger entering the hedge maze on the Mortmaignes estate and gives chase on foot, unarmed. The remaining characters of the episode follow close behind, and suddenly each character is wandering through the maze alone, either in search of the tiger or running from it. At the center of the maze, they come together, Morse shielding an innocent woman and her baby from the tiger while Superintendent Bright shoots it as it jumps for them.

The Guardian praises metatextual elements of the episode, saying: "That its chief murder suspect was a tiger need not detain us here" (Collins). This opinion seems to be shared by critics and showrunners alike. Surely, one would think, Morse and his later boss, Superintendent Strange, who also appears in *Endeavour*, would remember up until their retirement that once, the murderer was a tiger. However, in their many spats about appropriate police procedure, never does Morse think to tell Strange: "Remember that time in 1967, when I figured out a woman was using a tiger as a murder weapon? Surely you can trust my methods!" Of course, one can hardly blame the novelist Colin Dexter or writers of the original television show for not knowing what strange plot twists would eventually occur in a prequel they hadn't even conceived of. One can, however, wonder how this fantastical turn of

events could go so utterly unremarked upon as to not even be mentioned in any of the subsequent four seasons of *Endeavour*. There was a free-roaming tiger in Oxfordshire, after all. Not only does one throwaway line in the episode indicate that it was living off local livestock for years, it killed several people. Surely this would be memorable. In 2012 in Essex, a Maine Coon cat named "Teddy Bear" was mistaken for a lion and 25 officers of the Essex Police as well as two helicopters were called in to investigate (George). One shudders to think what would happen in Essex if a real tiger was used as a murder weapon.

Endeavour is not a show that forgets its own continuity. In this very episode, Inspector Thursday is still struggling with the after-effects of a gunshot wound he received at the end of the previous season. Sergeant Strange apologizes to Morse for having inadvertently become his boss after passing the Sergeant's exam when Morse couldn't, due in part to Strange being a member of the Freemasons and in part due to Morse consistently causing trouble. The final episode of the previous season tied together plot threads of the first nine episodes. There was no shift in creative direction preceding *Prey*: Russell Lewis is credited as the writer of every episode of the show. Nonetheless, the tiger did it.

At this juncture, I expect readers of this essay to have totally exhausted the shock value of the phrase "the tiger did it." So what if the tiger did it? *Midsomer Murders*, a contemporary of *Morse,* once featured a black-gloved killer who murdered by shoving a poisoned pasta dish down their victim's throats (season 4, episode 1). *Sherlock*, the BBC's modern retelling of *Sherlock Holmes*, includes an episode in which a boomerang did it (season 2, episode 1). In fact, the first time I saw *Prey*, I did not register at all the utter absurdity of a wealthy young woman in Oxford of the 1960s using a tiger secretly living on her family's grounds as a murder weapon. Is this a symptom of exposure? Has the wealth of crime shows available totally desensitized viewers to ridiculous excesses of violence?

In the case of *Endeavour*, I would argue against the above. In the case of *Endeavour*, the tiger does not come as a surprise. Unlike *Sherlock*'s *A Scandal in Belgravia*, which relies on the shock value of the unexpected and allows the viewers no opportunity to discover the boomerang culprit before Sherlock reveals it to them (Brewis), *Prey* introduces the theory "a tiger did it" early in the episode. The opening scenes show a birdwatcher looking shocked through his binoculars as he spots something in the woods. A couple of hippies running through the woods are startled by sounds in the underbrush before one of them becomes the episode's second victim. A central figure in the episode is introduced as a wildlife conservation expert conducting research without explaining what, exactly, he is researching. An astute viewer might even posit a wild animal as the culprit before the coroner DeBryn suggests the ridiculous theory that the murder victim's injuries are consistent with a tiger attack. By the time Mr. Mortmaigne reveals his family used to keep big cats on their estate, it seems unavoidable that there must be a tiger *somewhere*.

The tiger being well set-up within the story does not entirely excuse other failings, however. When viewing the episode divorced from its context within the

series, some questions become unavoidable. Why is the culprit of a four-year-old assault helping the Mortmaignes take care of their secret tiger? Did he kill the au pair or was it the tiger? Which of the Mortmaignes even knows about the tiger? Which of Georgina's victims were intentionally mauled by the tiger and which were accidental? And why does no one ever mention the tiger again? None of these questions are answered. Still, this exceptionally strange sequence of events does not register as an unusual episode—why?

Prey's tiger is not the core of the episode. In fact, the tiger is incidental at best in the context of the show. Instead, the episode, which does little to forward the plot of the series as a whole, coasts on theme. One ever-present theme in *Morse* and therefore also in *Endeavour* is that of class. Morse, despite having upper-class taste in music and literature, is the child of a working-class household and utterly despises the wealthy, especially those with titles. Frequently, this dislike is validated by the text, with in-fighting between the supremely wealthy as the motive for gruesome murders, such as in the 1989 episode of *Morse* entitled *Ghost in the Machine* (season 3, episode 1). *Prey* touches on this theme as well: the Mortmaignes are as idle as they are dysfunctional. The heir to the house does little with his time besides planning the opening of a park on the extensive grounds with their staff. His two sisters stroll around said grounds and have cryptic conversations with Morse, one taking responsibility for her husband's death in a boating accident and the other blaming herself for being mauled by the tiger years previously. But while Morse expresses concern that these young women see divine punishment for their sins in what has happened to them, and while implicit within the denouement of the episode in the hedge maze is a culmination of the hubris of the upper class believing they can control nature, this theme remains an undercurrent barely even relevant to the plot.

Far more important to the episode is the theme of inequality. *Endeavour* often goes out of its way to point out the inequality of the police force. Morse, who does not conform to expectations for a man of his age and class, must consistently prove his worth. Especially in this season, however, the role of gender inequality becomes more central. Constable Trewlove joins Oxford City Police as the first female police officer in the precinct. An earlier moment in the episode shows Morse questioning her desire to become a policewoman. She questions why she shouldn't, clearly expecting him to name her gender as an impediment. Morse, proving himself better than his contemporaries, says she seems "bright" and that she could do better. This moment follows the stand-in coroner summarily dismissing the murder victim's girlfriend's belief that her boyfriend couldn't have drowned because they had been in the wrong part of the river. The context—pointed reference to the show's recurrent theme of period-accurate sexism being rejected by the show's heroes—makes the coroner even less believable, paving the way for DeBryn to return from his fishing holiday to announce that in his medical opinion, a tiger did it.

Theme does the heavy lifting for *Prey*. Georgina's motives for committing murder by tiger are barely explained beyond a throwaway line that as a girl, she was "a little in love" with the wildlife conservation expert she would go on to murder

via tiger attack. At the end of the episode, it is implied they had a relationship before she was mauled by the tiger, disfiguring her. However, the context of the themes fills in the gaps: as a woman, she is forever at the mercy of an unfeeling society, especially opposite the much older wildlife conservation expert she is in love with. His inappropriate relationship with his au pair, shown in the opening moments of the show, cements his poor treatment of women in general. Georgina enacts her revenge for his abandonment via tiger, capturing not only her lacking agency (she cannot even get her own revenge but must hope the tiger will attack the right people through the placement of scented handkerchiefs), but also her lacking sanity. This, the regular *Endeavour* watcher could piece together, was caused by her upper-class upbringing, so divorced from reality that she views her disfigurement by the tiger as her own fault. Understanding the themes of the show allows the numerous flaws in the construction of the episode to fade into the background; the questionable motivation of the episode's culprit becomes clear within the context of the themes of the show as a whole.

In her article "Prestige TV: Why Are We Sure It Looks Like a 10-Hour-Movie?," journalist Kathryn VanArendonk cites a variety of showrunners of so-called prestige television describing their product as long-form films. A prestige series, according to this school of thought, can only be judged as a whole rather than by episode, because it is art rather than entertainment. Length is a marker of quality, as is the absence of closure on an episode-to-episode basis. The story only ends with the show. VanArendonk criticizes this trend as exhausting to consume on a regular basis and laments the lack of value granted to shows following a more episodic format.

Is *Endeavour* prestige TV? It certainly matches some of the other qualifiers VanArendonk lists – it is a serious show, it can be difficult to follow, it has storylines that transcend its episodic format. However, it remains in some ways tied to its roots as a police procedural drama: each episode solves an individual murder. Straddling the line between prestige and pulp, with little relevance for the overall plot of the show, *Prey* marks its continuity within the show via theme rather than story. Since this individual episode is not the end of the series and thus the culmination of the plot, the audience could be expected to care more about Thursday's emotional state and Morse's tête-a-tête with Constable Trewlove than about the logic of a tiger living in the woods going unnoticed for upwards of five years in central England. Because gender inequality becomes more and more central to the show, as long as the theme recurs in upcoming episodes, it might not matter that the tiger is never mentioned again. *Endeavour*, in a twist that is admittedly surreal in retrospect, forms an early example of how to straddle the line between long-form prestige television and the episodic format at its roots. Using theme, *Prey* builds a connective tissue between episodes that makes the particulars of the episode irrelevant but the message at its root central to the understanding of the show as a whole.

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Essen lesen: Lissabonner Gastronomie bei Eça de Queirós

Tobias Brandenberger

Schreiben über Essen bringt als eine Konstante in der kreativen wie reflexiven Auseinandersetzung mit kulturellen Produkten seit Jahrhunderten viele und sehr unterschiedliche Texte hervor: In Rezeptsammlungen und Kochbüchern, wissenschaftlichen und erzieherischen Schriften über Ernährung, auf Speisekarten und Menus, in gastronomischen Erfahrungsberichten und Restaurantkritiken, aber auch in zahlreichen imagologischen Abhandlungen über Küche und Essverhalten diverser Länder und Regionen sowie natürlich in im engeren Sinn literarischen Werken gehen zu lesender Text und verzehrbare Nahrung unterschiedliche Korrelationen ein. Sie alle haben in den letzten Jahrzehnten zu einer zunehmenden Verschränkung wissenschaftlicher Zugänge geführt, die als ein transdisziplinäres Feld unter der kombinierten Etikette von *literature & food studies* gefasst werden können.

Für die Literaturwissenschaft besonders relevant sind Formen fiktionalen Schreibens, in denen Nahrung, Essen und Trinken prominent in den Fokus gestellt, mit Sinn aufgeladen und auf bedeutsame Weise mit Handlung und Figuren verzahnt werden. Zahlreiche literarische Werke bieten Inszenierungen von kulinarischer *commensality*, Beschreibungen von Speisen und Getränken, vor allem auch Inbezugsetzungen von Nahrungsaufnahme, Genuss, menschlicher Befindlichkeit und Kommunikation oder Interaktion, die durchaus nicht akzidentiell oder vernachlässigbar sind, sondern sich bei genauerem Hinsehen als essentiell für das Textverständnis erweisen – eine Diagnose, die nach genauerer Betrachtung ruft.

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Eigentlicher Auslöser für die Erkenntnis, wie erhellend und notwendig es für die Interpretation verschiedener Aspekte eines Textes sein kann, diesen kulinarischen Bereich gebührend zu beachten, war für mich die Lektüre des Oeuvres des portugiesischen Autors José Maria Eça de Queirós (1845–1900), bei der sich – fast epiphanisch – das Potential eines verknüpft gastronomisch-literaturwissenschaftlichen Zugriffs offenbarte. Im Folgenden soll die Frage, wie in literarischer Fiktion Essen und Trinken auf spezifische Weise Information transportieren, und welcher Bedeutungsgehalt (nicht bloß soziokulturell-performativ, sondern auch metaphorisch-symbolisch im Sinne einer kodierten Vermittlung von Aussagen und Gedanken) Gastronomie und Ernährung dort innewohnt, anhand eines dieser Werke betrachtet werden: ein Beispiel in seiner konkreten kulturellen Bedingtheit – hier derjenigen einer spezifischen kulinarisch-gastronomischen und nutritiven Tradition, nämlich der portugiesischen – und auch in seiner historischen Markiertheit, die jedoch nicht einer aktuellen Lesbarkeit zuwiderzulaufen braucht.

Die europäischen Literaturen des 19. Jahrhunderts und insbesondere das exponentiell an Beliebtheit gewinnende Genre des Romans bieten häufig Ausgestaltungen von beinahe freskenartigen Szenen des Essens, Trinkens, Tafelns, aber auch die Thematisierung von Hunger, Appetit oder Sättigung und Exzess (die typischerweise Brücken zu den ebenfalls rekurrent verhandelten Feldern von Lust und Libido schlagen) sowie die gekonnte Platzierung signifikanter Elemente aus dem Gastronomischen, die wie entzifferbare Indizien auf wesentliche Sachverhalte gelesen und verstanden werden sollen.

Das ist auch in Portugal so, wo Eça de Queirós als wichtigster Vertreter des realistisch-naturalistischen Romans immer wieder mit der Dimension der Nahrung und ihrer mehr oder weniger genussvollen Einverleibung unter verschiedenen Umständen operiert. Seit seinem ersten Skandalroman *O crime do Padre Amaro* (*Das Verbrechen des Pater Amaro*, 1875), in dem maßlos schmausende Kleriker eindrücklich präsentieren, wie ernst sie selber den ihren Schäfchen anheimgelegten Verzicht auf leibliche Freuden nehmen, über den ausladenden Familienroman *Os Maias* (*Die Maias*, 1888), der gleich drei detailliert ausgestaltete Diners präsentiert, während derer mit bissiger Ironie Sozialkritik geübt und die portugiesische Gesellschaft in ihrer Mittelmäßigkeit, Arroganz und Selbstgefälligkeit entlarvt, aber auch ästhetische und philosophische Probleme erörtert werden, bis zum postum erschienenen *A cidade e as serras* (*Stadt und Gebirg*, 1901), dessen Protagonist nach langem Ausharren in Paris zurück in der urwüchsigen Heimat endlich anstelle raffinierter *gourmandises* wieder bodenständige Speisen kostet: Stets spielen Speis und Trank, Tafelkultur, Etikette und gastronomische Geselligkeit eine zentrale Rolle.

Eine eigentliche Poetik des Alimentären wird besonders schön sichtbar in *O Primo Basílio* (*Vetter Basílio*, 1878), einem Roman, der nur so strotzt von kulinarischen Elementen, Speisen und Getränken, Szenen des Essens, des Naschens, der Übersättigung. Es ist ein Werk, das hervorragend verdeutlichen kann, warum und wie ein Lesen mit spezifischem Fokus auf Nahrung sinnvoll und inspirierend, ja

sogar notwendig ist für ein adäquates Verstehen sowohl des Texts wie auch seiner literarischen Relevanz und nicht zuletzt der Kultur, aus der er hervor gegangen ist oder in deren Kontext er bis heute gelesen wird.

Im Lissabon der 1870er Jahre führen der pragmatisch-prosaische Ministerialbeamte Jorge und seine hübsche aber naive junge Frau Luísa, ein kinderloses Durchschnittsehepaar aus dem gehobenen Bürgertum, eine ruhige Existenz. Umgeben werden sie von einem unspektakulären Freundes- und Bekanntenkreis: dem pedantischen Conselheiro Acácio mit seinen ebenso langatmigen wie reaktionären Ausführungen zu Wirtschaft und Verwaltung; der altbackenen, frömmelnden, freilich von unstillbaren sinnlichen Gelüsten heimgesuchten Dona Felicidade; dem sich seit Jahren vergeblich um eine feste Anstellung oder Praxis bemühenden Medizinabsolventen Julião; dem umtriebigen Theaterautor Ernestinho, dessen kitschig-romantische Dramen ständig neu besprochen und umgeschrieben werden müssen; und dem selbstlosen und stets hilfsbereiten Busenfreund von Jorge, Sebastião.

Ausgerechnet während einer langen Dienstreise Jorges kehrt nun Basílio, der charmante Cousin Luísas und ihre Jugendliebe, aus Brasilien zurück und verführt die sich im monotonen Großstadtsommer langweilende und nach der exzessiven Lektüre romantischer Romane abenteuerhungrig gewordene Ehefrau. Ihr unvorsichtiges Verhalten führt nicht bloß zum Getuschel der Nachbarn, sondern auch zur systematischen Erpressung durch die missgünstige Dienstmagd Juliana, die kompromittierende Briefe in ihren Besitz gebracht hat und nun im Haushalt die Rollen umkehrt. Basílio verweigert sich einer gemeinsamen Flucht mit der verzweifelten Luísa, setzt sich selbst aber umgehend nach Paris ab. Nach der Heimkehr ihres Mannes und angesichts der zunehmenden Forderungen und Drohungen Julianas wendet sich Luísa in ihrer Not an den loyalen Sebastião, der während eines Opernbesuchs der Herrschaft die Hausangestellte zur Rede stellt und sie zur Herausgabe der Briefe zwingt, worauf sie einen Herzinfarkt erleidet und stirbt. Doch auch die erschöpfte Luísa wird schwer krank; als ein Brief von Basílio aus Paris in die Hände des Ehemanns gerät und er sie damit konfrontiert, verschlechtert sich ihr Zustand und führt zu ihrem Tod.

Eça de Queirós offeriert in *O Primo Basílio* einerseits minutiöse Darstellungen von Geschmack, Gestalt, Verarbeitung, Textur der angerichteten Speisen, sozusagen im Rahmen eines traditionell realistischen Programms der *descriptio*, insbesondere zur atmosphärischen Einbettung in ein bestimmtes Szenario, und nicht selten garniert mit Elementen, die schon in Richtung der naturalistischen Ästhetik des (auch) Hässlichen zielen.

Darüber hinaus wird zweitens gastronomische Kultur, von der einzelnen Speise oder dem Rezept bis hin zu *in toto* als typisch wahrgenommenen Ernährungsgewohnheiten, aus einer quasi national(istisch)en Perspektive autoimagotypisch als Ausdruck von portugiesischem Wesen registriert; eine Art kultureller Blaupause, auch und gerade im Kontrast zur französischen Küche, und sehr oft wertend aus dem Blick einzelner Figuren.

Das dritte Terrain, auf dem Eça das Kulinarische für die Narrativik fruchtbar macht, ist dasjenige einer semantischen Funktionalisierung von Speisen und Getränken: Diesen selbst, ihrer Zubereitung, Präsentation oder Einverleibung, sowie der damit einhergehenden sozialen Interaktion wird auf verschiedene Art über die sichtbare Denotation hinaus zusätzliche Bedeutung zugewiesen, welche die Lesenden in einer Art komplementärer Semiose dekodieren können und sollen. Das Gastronomische dient dann zur Charakterisierung von Figuren und Figurenkonstellationen, Räumen, Ereignissen; oft beinahe subliminal zur Schaffung von Stimmung und zum subtilen Transportieren von Botschaften. Diese werden anhand von Kulinarischem metaphorisch verschlüsselt und offenbaren bei einer aufmerksamen, quasi gastronomisch sensibilisierten Lektüre dann durchaus Widersprüche zwischen schönem Schein und trister Realität oder Fissuren auf der Oberfläche gefälliger Darbietung … und entsprechen insofern, wie das dem realistisch-naturalistischen Roman eigen ist, einer latent oder offen kritischen Haltung.

Die drei eben skizzierten Verfahren fließen in den zahlreichen einschlägigen Szenen nicht selten zusammen und tischen dem Publikum ein facettenreiches Menu literarisch-fiktionaler Verwendung von Gastronomie auf.

Der Roman beginnt mit einer entspannten sonntäglichen Frühstücksszene zwischen den jungen Eheleuten, in der freilich symbolisch interessante Fliegen vom klebrigen Zucker angezogen werden, welche nicht bloß die negativen Seiten des scheinbaren Idylls signalisieren, sondern auch auf kommendes Ungemach vorausdeuten. Im zweiten Kapitel illustriert dann die detailreiche Präsentation einer abendlichen Teegesellschaft das Aufgesetzte und Konventionelle, hinter dem sich unaussprechliche Probleme der Figuren verbergen. Ein vertrauliches Mittagessen der Freundinnen gipfelt in einem Stockfisch-, Olivenöl- und Knoblauchexzess der wegen ihres auch erotischen Hedonismus schlecht beleumundeten Leopoldina; parallel dazu offenbart die Völlerei beim Herrenabend mit Diner im Hause Acácios primitivste Gelüste der Anwesenden. Umgekehrt charakterisieren die von Basílio anlässlich eines nächtlichen Spaziergangs in der staubgeschwängerten und von Menschenmassen verstopften Unterstadt vorgeschlagenen Genüsse von Sorbet, Rebhuhn und *Champagne frappé* ihn selber als überlegenen und eleganten Kosmopoliten; und insofern ist es keine Überraschung, dass er als Verführer mit einem Korb voller Delikatessen zum erotischen Picknick mit der hingerissenen Cousine auftaucht. Die schiere Besessenheit wiederum, mit der die verbitterte Dienstmagd Juliana in der Küche heimlich Bouillon und andere kalorienreiche Kost verschlingt, offenbart zum einen, dass sie sich auf diese Weise schadlos hält für die durch ihre Herrschaft erlittenen Demütigungen und lässt gleichzeitig ihre panische Angst erahnen, in einer ungewissen und ökonomisch nicht abgesicherten Zukunft nichts mehr in den Magen zu bekommen.

Unablässig gelangen so in *O Primo Basílio* signifikante, nicht explizit thematisierte, ja vielleicht gar nicht thematisierbare Problemkomplexe und Bedeutungsschichten in einen gastronomisch gefilterten Fokus. In Ess- und Trinkszenen voller Anspielungen und Mehrdeutigkeiten werden Assoziationen geschaffen, die

metaphorisch geschickt Sachverhalte andeuten, und natürlich auch explizit kulturelle Konflikte ausgetragen und Differenzen exemplifiziert.

Als ein ganz besonders eindrückliches und gleichzeitig verstörendes Beispiel sei eine kleine und eher unscheinbare Szene aus dem vierten Kapitel hervorgehoben, in deren Mittelpunkt die Ekphrasis eines überladenen Konditoreischaufensters steht.

Sebastião, über das Gerede in der Nachbarschaft wegen Basílios ständiger Besuche bei Luísa zunehmend beunruhigt, will Julião zu Rate ziehen, den er in der Rua de São Roque trifft.

> Sie hatten an der Konditorei haltgemacht. Im Schaufenster hinter ihnen war eine Anzahl von Malvasierflaschen mit farbenprächtigen Etiketten ausgestellt, rötliche durchsichtige Gelatinestücke, ekelerregendes gelbliches Eierkonfekt und Gebäck von einem dunklen Kastanienbraun, in dem traurige Nelken aus weißem oder rosa Papier steckten. Abgestandene gelbliche Schlagsahne weichte in schalenförmigen Waffeln; dicke Marmeladentafeln zerflossen in der Hitze; zierliche Muschelpasteten drängten ihre vertrockneten Krusten aneinander. Und in der Mitte wand sich auf einer länglichen Schüssel gewichtig eine abscheuliche dickbäuchige Eierlamprete, mit einem Leib von eklem Gelb, den Rücken mit Zuckerschnörkeln bekleistert, das Maul weit aufgesperrt; aus ihrem dicken Kopf stierten zwei schreckliche Schokoladenaugen, ihre Mandelzähne gruben sich in eine Mandarine aus Chila, und rings um das häßliche Ungeheuer tummelten sich die Fliegen. (156)

Die Auslage der Konditorei nimmt in ihrer Desolatheit einerseits die Unansehnlichkeit und die mangelnde Hygiene des Innenraums vorweg, in dem die beiden nun einen Kaffee trinken gehen; sie veranschaulicht gleichzeitig in einer Art Indizfunktion die meteorologischen Umstände des schwülen Tages und bringt den Lesenden spürbar eine unangenehme Stimmung von drückender, ungesunder Hitze, Langeweile, Unlust, Überdruss nahe. Ursprünglich hochwertige Ingredienzien wie der Teig der *empadinhas*, das Ei und der Schlagrahm, die Quitten der *marmelada*, zersetzen sich und werden ungenießbar: Wer könnte ernsthaft essen wollen, was hier in einer Palette abgedumpfter oder unechter Farben vor sich hin zerrinnt und verdirbt?

Vor allem aber verweist das Schaufenster, das sichtbar präsentiert, was unterschwellig irritiert, ganz konkret auf das Abstoßende, Geschmacklose, um das die Gedanken Sebastiãos seit Tagen unablässig kreisen: der ekelhafte, aggressive Klatsch von Leuten, die sich über andere das Maul zerreißen wie hier die *lampreia de ovos*, Allegorie oder Personifizierung der üblen Nachrede, des böswilligen, degoutanten Verleumdens.

In *O Primo Basílio*, auf den ersten Blick ein Ehebruchsroman wie die in zeitlicher Nähe der in anderen europäischen Literaturen entstehenden realistischen Klassiker *Madame Bovary*, *Anna Karenina*, *La Regenta* oder *Effi Briest,* scheinen eher die mehr

oder weniger genussreichen Tätigkeiten des Essens (und Trinkens) und der einverleibten Substanzen als die erotische Transgression im Vordergrund zu stehen. Die zentrale Bildersprache des Textes rekurriert vor allem auf dieses kulinarische Feld, kreiert aus ihm Assoziationen, und bezieht von dort ihr Material für Anspielungen und Vergleiche. Dies impliziert freilich auch, dass beim Lesepublikum eine gewisse gastronomische Kompetenz und Sensibilität erwartet werden muss, um die Komplexität des Werks und die Vielfalt der verwendeten literarischen Rekurse entsprechend würdigen zu können.

Als Literaturwissenschaftler erschließt sich mir aus der Lektüre hier aufs Deutlichste, was für andere Texte ebenfalls Geltung beanspruchen darf: wie wichtig die Verbindungslinie zwischen Nahrung und Literatur, zwischen Essen und Lesen für ein kulturwissenschaftlich sensibilisiertes wissenschaftliches Arbeiten am Textverständnis ist. Allen Leserinnen und Lesern, auch den nicht spezialisierten, zeigt *O Primo Basílio*, wie bereichernd die Verschränkung dieser zwei Felder zu einer lustvoll-sinnlichen Textaneignung beiträgt – und legt uns allen nahe, beides, Lesen und Essen aufmerksam zu genießen.

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Yolanda Salas, *Bolívar y la historia en la consciencia popular*

Charles L. Briggs

Writing an essay about *Bolívar y la historia en la consciencia popular* (*Bolívar and History in Popular Consciousness*) is of significance to me for two primary reasons. First, it enables me to provide a tribute to one of Latin America's great folklorists, Yolanda Salas, who was, until her untimely death in 2007, one of my closest friends. Second, I hope that outlining this remarkable work will help draw attention to the rich body of folkloristic scholarship produced in Latin America.

I fear that many readers will need a brief introduction to the principal figure in the book, Simón Bolívar (1783–1830). Bolívar was the "Liberator" who launched the war for independence that ended Spanish rule in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela. "Universally apprehended in Venezuela," Rafael Sánchez (2016: 2) suggests that Bolívar is venerated "as the supreme embodiment and manifestation of the Venezuelan 'people.'" Bolívar's presence became the leitmotif of the presidency of the socialist government of Hugo Chávez Frías, elected in 1998. Chávez's desire to reinscribe Bolívar's presence even more deeply in Venezuela included renaming the country the "Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela" in the 1999 Constitution. Writing in a country in which discourse about Bolívar's role is so pervasive, it is a tribute to Salas's talent that she opened up a new approach that redefined how Bolívar figured into the country's conflicting class, race, and ideological fields. In a textual field dominated by historians, political scientists, philosophers, and other scholars, she was able to demonstrate that folkloristics could provide a novel point of departure.

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Salas received her undergraduate degree in literature at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello and her Master's in Contemporary Latin American Literature at the Universidad Simón Bolívar, both in Caracas, Venezuela. She undertook PhD coursework at the Folklore Institute of Indiana University, but personal circumstances prevented her from completing the degree. Of most relevance is her intense and far-reaching knowledge of three areas. First, she was consummately versed in Latin American literature and its academic study, which attuned her to a broad range of voices and modes of representing them. Second, she had an impressive command of cultural theory in Latin America, including folkloristic research but extending into many other fields. Third, she read broadly in North American, European, and other social and cultural theory. Thus, even as she identified strongly with folkloristics (in its various designations in Latin America), her research and writing produced an ongoing critical synthesis of these different research traditions. Enjoying a glass of wine at her Caracas apartment always yielded bibliographic and theoretical surprises: recommendations as to the year's best Latin American novels, news of an emerging scholar of Latin American folkloristics, the chance to view a remarkable work of Venezuelan folk art, and an introduction to a work of North American, European, or African scholarship I had missed. Her other books include a comprehensive study of Venezuela folk narratives, one on ideology and language in modern literature, and a work examining the legacy of another figure in the war of independence, Manuel Piar. She dedicated years to working in a remarkable research institution, the Fundación de Etnomusicología y Folklore (FUNDEF), serving as its President 1998–2001, and she documented the rich worlds of folklore that thrived in some of Venezuela's toughest prisons (Salas 2003).

In embarking on a project that proposed rethinking Bolívar in Venezuela, Salas was clearly deeply versed in the mountains of historical, literary, biographical, political science, and philosophical work on him. Nevertheless, she crafted a comprehensive program of fieldwork that would take her—along with research assistants Norma González Viloria and Ronny Velásquez—to conduct ethnography with a wide cross-section of Venezuelans, thereby displacing control of Bolívar's legacy from the cadre of elite intellectuals who shaped official historical narratives. She chose to concentrate her work in towns and cities along the route that Bolívar took during a period of flight from Spanish forces to the eastern part of Venezuela in 1814. This decision enabled her to discover popular histories by interviewing people recognized by their communities as repositories of popular traditions that recount Bolívar's presence. Her rationale also followed from attention to racialized colonial difference, given that this route included areas in which plantations had exploited slave labor and those with a substantial indigenous presence.

Salas was uniquely positioned to carry out this fieldwork. Her extensive research on traditional tales and folk art, as well as her time working in FUNDEF, had provided broad experience in rural communities and low-income urban areas. She was already familiar with the genres that would prove important in the Bolívar work: anecdote, legend, historical tales, conversational narratives, myth, and epic.

Nevertheless, Salas realized that Bolivarian stories often emerged in narrative fragments that got woven and unraveled in conversation. Rather than attempting to provide linear, totalizing accounts, Salas allowed the rhythms of memory and narrative process to inform her fieldwork and structure the experimental, engaging style she uses in the book. Interested in processes of learning and transmission, Salas wove insights regarding how memories have been produced, moved, and transformed in a variety of ways over 170 years, which also became the focus of a chapter. Salas decided that rethinking the principal historical figure in Venezuelan history and imaginaries would require, in Laura Nader's (1972) terms, not just working "down" in class terms but working up and sideways as well. Her interlocutors thus included middle-class teachers and persons owning family business right up to the aristocratic families who controlled Venezuela's economy, political system, and dominant historical narratives. Her own class position, coming from an upper-class background, provided her with access to elite narrators.

Stepping into any bureaucratic or political office in Venezuela demands a confrontation with Bolívar. His portrait hanging directly above the chair of the official, Bolívar's rigid posture, elegant military uniform, and penetrating gaze seem to radiate downwards, injecting the person sitting in the chair below with authority and doubling the visitor's sense of subjection to the power of the state. This is the Bolívar that Salas found in the narratives she collected from aristocratic narrators. This is the Bolívar that provides a seemingly uncontestable national unifying symbol, controlled by elites "to create a false consciousness and national ideology" and specifically to control the aspirations of poor Venezuelans (1987: 38). These narratives position Bolívar as a product of Whiteness and elite privilege, born in the center of social, political, and symbolic power, Caracas, cared for by an enslaved person, Hipólita, after his parents died, and educated first by distinguished private teachers and then in Europe. Aristocratic narrators affirmed their inclusion in the ranks of "the families" that dominated Venezuela until 1999, not only by articulating how Bolívar's and their family stories connected but often by how they and their families had helped produce, stabilize, and reify Venezuela's Bolivarian legacy and ensure its ongoing status as a key source of symbolic and political capital. Such narratives positioned elite families as civilizing forces, bringing technological, cultural, and economic progress to their regions. These narrative performances seemed geared to vaccinate succeeding generations from possible attempts to usurp their family's historical, social, and political power.

As Salas retraces Bolívar's footsteps with subaltern residents, however, this Bolívar seemed to be nowhere in sight. Instead, discrepant Bolívars seem to crop up everywhere. Birth, given its connection with place and race, was crucial. A recurrent element placed Bolívar's birth in a small eastern town, Capaya, not the capital. Both reproducing and questioning the power of Whiteness and class, Bolívar's father's racial and class privilege are projected in assertions that Bolívar's birth mother was a slave on his estate; she was purportedly killed shortly after the birth "'so that she wouldn't say anything'" (1987: 41). Accounts by persons who

assert indigenous identities tie Bolívar to their own racialized genealogies and places. These narratives include sideways glances: Even as they challenge official histories, narrators often fracture their own stories by gesturing at other possibilities—other places that claim to be Bolívar's birthplace, other genealogies of racial contestation. Not surprisingly for legend scholars, metanarrative genealogies often feature a local historical figure with seemingly direct knowledge of the persons and events described, tracing the persons to whom (often) she transmitted this knowledge, even as a politics of doubt, uncertainty, and imagination enter in: "'Yes, Bolívar's history can never be scientifically known, because no one [still living] knew him in life'" (1987: 41).

One of the most inspiring features of the book for this reader is how Salas connects the making and fracturing of historical memory, oral literary textures, and dimensions of daily life. In areas where the legacy of plantations and slavery is still palpable, Blackness and racial oppression loom large in narratives of Bolívar. Securing support from Haiti for a new attempt to displace Spanish colonialism came in exchange for Bolívar's promise that he would abolish slavery in the lands that he "liberated." Projecting the role of enslaved persons in Bolívar's birth, rearing, and military exploits and the fulfillment of his liberatory promise inscribe these accounts into the fabric of daily struggles against continuing forms of race and class oppression. When Salas conducted her research, a racializing ideology that projected the Venezuelan population as the product of a benign process of miscegenation was largely prevalent in dominant classes: if Venezuelans are all *café con leche* (coffee with milk, Black and White), then binary racial classifications are irrelevant, Blackness is "cultural" rather than "political," and anti-Black racism characterizes the United States, not Venezuela. The White/Black frame similarly placed racialized oppression of indigenous populations out of the dominant realm of discourse about race (Briggs and Mantini-Briggs 2003).

If it seems that Salas was resurrecting a hegemony versus resistance binary, digging into the pages of *Bolívar y la historia* will show that she anticipated critiques of this once comfortable scholarly form of classification and self-positioning. It is particularly in her treatment of the mythification of Bolívar as a Christ-like figure and his elevation as one of the leading figures in the "cult" of María Lionza that any reduction of her argument to a simple political binary vanishes. Looking ahead to multispecies folkloristics, Salas thought through the epic figure of Bolívar's white horse, corporeally united with its heroic rider and magically appearing and disappearing with him. During nearly four decades of work in Venezuela, I can recall myriad moments where friends suddenly exclaimed—"there's Bolívar's white horse!"

Chávez previously attempted to gain power in the name of "the people" through a coup d'état in 1992. Subsequently jailed, Chávez listened in prison to many Venezuelans tell the sorts of narratives of the oppressed that Salas collected. After being elected as President in 1998, he held office hours in the wee hours of the morning: ordinary Venezuelans lined up tell their stories, debate political

philosophy, and make requests. During his weekly *Aló, Presidente* (*Hello, President*) television programs, which lasted hours, Chávez replayed on national television conversations with low-income Venezuelans. This process constitutes one of the most interesting examples of the mediatization of folklore that I have ever witnessed (Briggs 2020).

Whence Bolívar? If you enter a government office in Venezuela today, his portrait still looms above you. Visual features mark him, however, as a new Bolívar, one more in line with narratives of the oppressed than those of the oppressors, in Salas's terms. In 2010, several years before his own death from cancer, President Chavez ordered Bolívar's exhumation from the National Pantheon. The explicit rationale was both forensic and narrative: to muster the power of science to decide once and for all if Bolívar died in 1830 from tuberculosis or from a more nefarious cause. The result, nonetheless, was a re-racialization of Bolívar, one that aligned him with the popular narratives that Salas documented: If Bolívar was not portrayed as embracing Blackness to the extent that Chávez both projected his own identity and was racially denigrated by his elite detractors, the new portrait undermined Bolívar's positioning as the foundational figure of White privilege. The optics of power radiating from Bolívar's bureaucratic presence are thus now more complex: the Liberator often looks more like visitors than bureaucrats. More discursive and political space have been opened up for attention to racism and Blackness, including attempts to "defolklorize" associations of Blackness with romanticized traditions of dress, music, and dance (García 1992).

With Yolanda Salas's death from cancer in 2007, folkloristics lost a major interpreter of contemporary ways that folklore informs how contemporary populations are facing rapidly shifting racial, political, ecological, and economic landscapes. And her friends, I among them, continue to miss the insights of a remarkable person whose generosity touched the lives of so many emerging scholars, Venezuelan, Latin American, North American, and European alike. I can only hope that this brief tribute to Yolanda Salas might inspire readers to explore not only her book but Latin American folkloristics more broadly.

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Reading Objects: Peter Gelker's Whirligigs

Simon J. Bronner

In *The Carver's Art* (1992), I contextualized objects in the life stories of woodcarvers who repeatedly made chains, caged balls, and fans. I found pattern among their narratives: all men, they transitioned from a rural to industrial environment and in old age resumed carving chains and caged balls from memories of their childhood. They used carving of a resistant hard substance such as wood to impress their youthful peers as they aged and to leave something of themselves to family members. Its familiar symbolism made it useful to signify issues that they found difficult to broach in public of feeling marginalized as older men in relation to a youth-oriented society. Working in dingy basements and garage workshops filled with mechanical contraptions, they held power when they presented their familiar wooden chains and cages. On the street, they could narrate in ritualized social encounters the symbolic oppositions of the process—fragile wood that looked like mighty iron, moving balls magically encased in rectangular frames, the technique of cutting in at a time when the makers felt cut out. Presented as play, or humor, the carvings framed anxieties they faced or wanted others to confront. I identified a "*regression*-progression behavioral *complex" (131) in the aging* male folk artist. The title suggested another paradox of folk arts among aging men: in appearing to create something new, and show their vitality, they ritualized an old memory to transition them to a final stage of life.

Years later, Lynn Gamwell, an art curator in New York, challenged my psychological thesis with the case of Peter Gelker who created whirligigs in old age. Like chains and balls-in-cages often dismissed as whimseys that filled time rather than carried meaning, whirligigs had not attracted scholarly attention beyond noting their

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persistence on the landscape as wind toys or mechanical novelties (Bishop and Coblentz 1984). Yet Gelker's distinctive creations appeared to encase personal stories as well as eye-catching motions (Gelker 2011). Unlike the earthy creators remembering their youth in rural backwaters, Gelker was a medical professional who had been born and raised in suburban Santa Ana, California. And since he analyzed therapeutic uses of narrative and humor, the question came up whether his work was folk art. Gamwell invited me to interpret Gelker's creations from an ethnological perspective for his first exhibition catalogue (Gamwell and Bronner 2015). She told me that Gelker learned the making of whirligigs from his father Thomas in childhood, and revived it after his father's death in 1999, at the age of 85. Born March 22, 1946, Peter placed his whirligigs made in a garage workshop in his yard and house, with the approval of his wife, and Gamwell had encouraged him to put his objects on display in a local gallery. The gallery director's commentary read Gelker's work as original aesthetic creations. He hailed Gelker's constructions as "beautiful art objects in themselves, skillfully constructed and carefully considered" (McGee 2015) but Gamwell hoped to get from me a reading of his mixture of tradition and innovation.

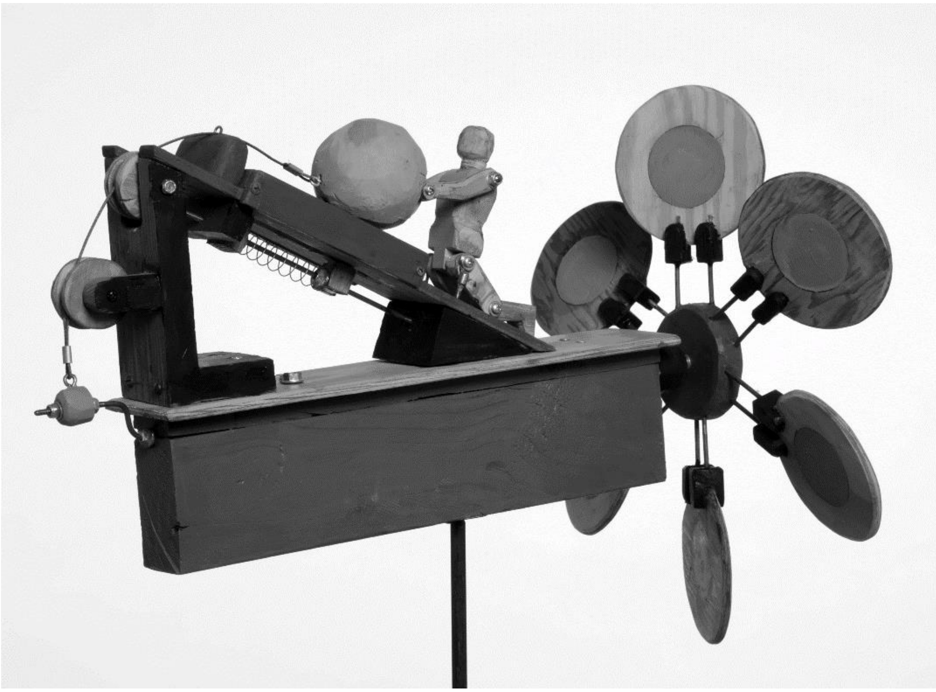


Fig. 1: "Man Pushing Rock" (Fruitless Toil of Sisyphus). 2008. 50.2 x 35.6 x 35.6 cm. Wood and metal. Photo courtesy of Peter Gelker.

Gelker's father was a machinist and tool and die maker, as was his older brother. The father had a home workshop and among the pragmatic tools was an object that drew attention with its bright colors and motion. Two small figures, brightly painted and wearing helmets, pumped up and down on opposite ends of a small railroad car. The movements of the men were powered by the calloused forefinger of his father rotating a tin propeller. The father explained to the boy that this creation was called a "whirligig" and taught him how to make it. For the elder Gelker, as with my chain carvers, the whirligig was a way to show off his human control and productive skills that were not satisfied at his machinist job. The father also wanted the boy to notice the historical reference of the contraption; he pointed out that the two men in his creation were "gandy dancers," an old term for railroad workers one might formerly see in the Depression-era Missouri of his youth. Over the following months, the mechanically oriented father built several more whirligigs, each with its own propeller-driven vision. He was not much interested in showing these pieces to anyone else except maybe to the occasional chance visitor to his workshop in the garage. In making those pieces, the son reflected, "he seemed to be reviewing and reworking something in himself." Peter said that by the time he turned twelve, his handwork "went into hibernation for the next forty years." He elaborated, "I fled the manual trades and built a better foundation for my wobbly self-esteem" by burying himself in books. "I thought I would achieve a standing superior to that of my father and brother," he said, but he admitted that he "secretly envied" them "for their mechanical skills." Those skills, he implied, were more manly and productive than his intellectual endeavors. He admired his father and brother for getting their hands dirty and appearing connected to their cultural roots (Gelker 2016).

For his fiftieth birthday, Peter's father and brother presented him with tools. But Gelker did nothing with them. Then in 1999, his father died suddenly in his workshop. The son took as many of his father's tools as he could cram into his own garage, although he claims he had no idea how or if he would ever use them. According to Gelker (2016), "several weeks after my father's death, I was taken with an unexpected and strong compulsion to build whirligigs." He tried to reconstruct what his father had done. Although he recalled the techniques, he had difficulty with the content. He expressed antipathy for the "superficial, cutesy themes of the vast majority of whirligigs." They all seemed to him "corny—you know, the kicking cow or the chicken pecking corn, or the bird with rotating wings." He asked himself, "Why did I feel compelled to build whirligigs when I couldn't stand their themes?"

One answer was his occupation and life stage. He said, "As an aging professional helper, I had become skeptical and disillusioned." He was not able to repair the world as he optimistically thought in his youth. He felt unproductive, stuck in a rut. Staring at his workshop bench, he reflected, "These experiences and feelings had fed my devaluation of the simple innocence in most whirligig themes." To be sure, he still claimed "an unchanged love of the form and medium of the whirligig, kinetic and wind-driven." His approach was to create contrasts of the humor and innocence represented by the form, and its cognitive associations, to often "angry,

depressing, or scary content." Gelker framed, or sublimated, the disturbing content to make it more approachable. Exaggerated teeth, he noticed, drew pleased responses, even though his intention, he said, was to evoke images of creatures often emerging from hidden places to express his anger at reality. Like narrating a legend in which the speaker seeks comment to evaluate his or her feelings on the subject, Gelker made whirligigs as ways to start conversation in his home and yard. They were appropriate as forms for this action because he related them to his patriarchal legacy, their folkness was instrumental in drawing a contrast with his personal surroundings, and they were in motion—and made noise that attracted attention. He said he "wanted the pieces to make the viewer laugh while engaging with or puzzling over them." He described this process less as an art, however, and more of an obsession. He shared that, "I simply HAD to make these whirligigs. I came to see that I still had many dormant mechanical and wood-working skills learned long ago from my father and brother" (Gelker 2016).

Only later in our conversations did he relate his handwork to his father. Previously, he connected it to his job stress and aging. When I asked about the timing of his work with the death of his father, he tried to link that to gaining his tools. He joked that with his dad's tools and a portrait of him hanging over the bench, he had built a "shrine." He smiled at recalling that he was reliving his father's experience of dividing the home between the inside where his mom ruled and outside, including the garage, where "dad was the monarch." Then he became serious when saying, "working in wood helped me hold onto my father after his death." Yet he also harbored resentment. He did not feel that his father approved of his career; he thought his father belittled his intellectual rather than hand work. Gelker (2016) offered that he agreed to showing his whirligigs in the gallery because secretly it was a "way to triumphantly surpass him." Yet once outside of his home and yard, the display of whirligigs put him in an extended depression, and he attributed this mental state to a final phase of grief and mourning over his father's death. Perhaps, too, the gallery space distanced Peter from his father's world and exaggerated the differences between father and son. Despite receiving acclaim from the gallery, Peter consequently lost the urge to make the whirligigs and ceased making them, or anything else.

The reason Peter sought his father's approval owed to what he described as an "overcloseness to an infantilizing mother" coupled with the feeling that his father was "remote." Although he wanted to best, and escape, him, in his old age, he confessed that the conscious choice of the whirligigs "was also a way to identify with or internalize him" (Gelker 2016). The whirligigs as a folk form among the small projects that Peter Gelker pursued represented his father's world. Indeed, his mother, and female figures are absent from his objects. To be sure, Gelker is more self-conscious than other creators about the therapeutic functions of his actions. Yet I found him less self-reflective on the themes he chose to express or for that matter the sublimation of his aging, masculinity issues, and family relationships he set in motion. Further, I offered him an idea outside of his awareness that he was

engaging in "psychological reactance," that is, becoming motivationally aroused by simultaneously taunting and honoring an authority he perceived to be limiting his behavioral freedom (Brehm and Brehm 1981). Thinking of his father is not enough; he needed a repeated activity to show his freedom was routine, normalized, or even traditional. As he said in his own words: "working with wood is concrete and tangible versus the abstract and amorphous thoughts and feelings I deal with all day long as a psychiatrist." The ambivalence he could not articulate was in part a guilt about not following his father's guidance and at the same time an anger for producing that guilt. His creation of the whirligigs displaced the content preferred by his father with his own, and through the repetition of the form emphasized the son's dominance, even if those conflicts were never resolved.

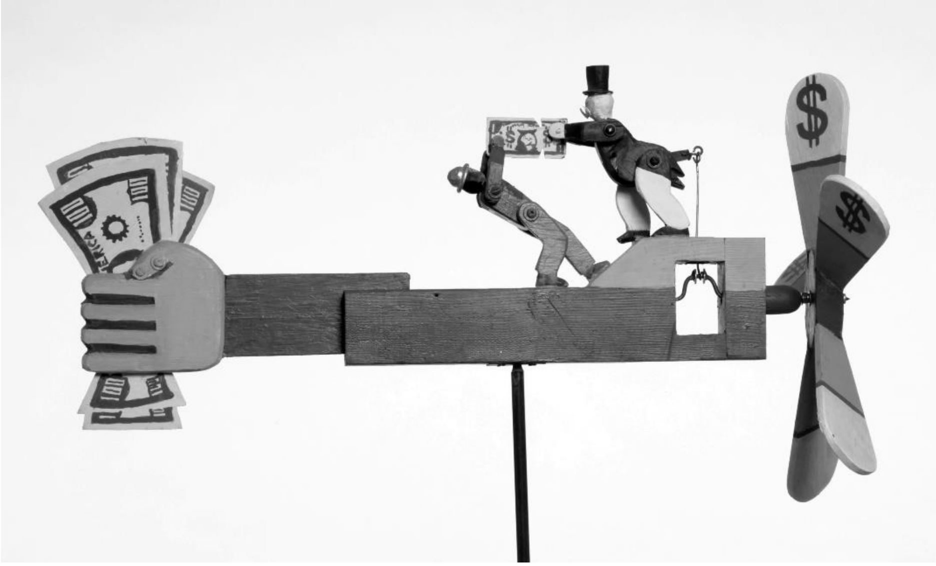


Fig. 2: "Worker and Capitalist." 2001. 34.3 x 58.4 x 33 cm. Wood and metal. Photo courtesy of Peter Gelker.

Gelker included in his creations what folklorists would read as traditional biblical themes, especially of the expulsion from the Garden of Eden (Ardery 1998). He also has narrative themes they will recognize such as Sisyphus rolling a boulder uphill (Fig. 1), bosom serpent, and monsters of the deep. One can discern literalizations of proverbs such as "death is at the door" and "the everlasting chase of the dollar" (integrated apparently with "time flies"). As I had noticed a symbolic opposition of fragile wood and hard metal among chain carvers, so too I viewed the "visual riddle" in Gelker's objects between man as machine, and in connection to psychological reactance, the behavioral freedom that a human really has within a restrictive "system." Through his whirligigs, Gelker conveys reactance commentaries about the relations between human power in his corporeal limit and higher or

larger powers. Gelker expresses in his whirligigs a never-ending cycle of materialistically pursuing the "almighty dollar" symbolized by the repetitive mechanical action of the whirligig (Fig. 2). Each of his creations implies a story that is literally driven by the motion of characters. The humor suggests critique, but not a means of escape. Not only were the whirligigs associated with his father, but gadgets represented more than other static woodcarving forms of chains and cages, the feeling of automation, the idea that there is a natural order that runs of itself or has an invisible force turning us toward the inevitability of death. His whirligigs, he surmised, show people as cogs in a big, always turning wheel. He nervously giggled as he said, "I guess I need to move on." Although ostensibly about the "system," his objects, he realized, were about him (Gelker 2016).

Contextualizing Gelker within the growing number of case studies of individual aging artists, one can view affirmation of the regression-progression behavioral complex that appears to be especially prevalent among men in post-industrial settings. In his case, the circumstances of his relationship with his father and mother are personalized, and yet cultural analysts might inquire more of how tradition perceived as activities associated with parents trigger life review issues, and often an urge to create, upon their death. Ethnologists might be wont to dismiss professional "lives of the mind" as obviating folkloric processes; in Gelker's case, however, his profession was a factor in the enactment of folk form and process. Although aging suggests interpretation of cognition in relation to life review, folk productions produced by older artists are read too often as a decontextualized aesthetic response. Gelker's objects are reminders that folk art production is not a continuous process and can be analyzed in the context of the moment and the maker's mental states. Toward shaping a theory of creative aging, folklorists can give attention to people engaging tradition as an adaptive, therapeutic activity as well as a communicative form. Digging into life story and observation of material surroundings, readers of objects can rethink craftswork as a particularly effective gendered manifestation of psychological reactance.

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Irmgard Keun, *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*

Karin Bürkert

Das kunstseidene Mädchen war lange Zeit mein Lieblingsbuch. Ich mochte die verschrobene, humorige Sprache, in der die Ich-Erzählerin von ihrem Leben im Berlin der 1930er-Jahre berichtet. Mir gefielen die bildreichen, realistischen, aber dennoch irgendwie entrückten Schilderungen des urbanen Berlins. Ich bewunderte die junge Protagonistin für ihren Mut, eigenwillig ihren Weg zu gehen, und bemitleidete sie gleichzeitig für ihre Entscheidungen. Heute mag ich das Buch aber vor allem, weil es mir mein erstes Forschungserlebnis schenkte und mich letztlich auf meinen Weg zur Empirischen Kulturwissenschaft und Kulturanthropologie führte.

Das kunstseidene Mädchen (1932) ist nach *Gilgi – eine von uns* (1931) der zweite Roman der Kölner Autorin Irmgard Keun (1905–82). Es gehört zum Genre der Neuen Sachlichkeit. Die Neue Sachlichkeit entwickelte sich in der Weimarer Republik aus den Strömungen des Naturalismus und des Expressionismus. Literatur und Malerei der Neuen Sachlichkeit zeichnen sich durch eine klare und präzise, auch als prosaisch und naiv wahrgenommene Darstellung des Alltags der Zwischenkriegszeit aus. In der bildenden Kunst sind insbesondere Otto Dix und Carl Grossberg, aber auch Grethe Jürgens für ihre Darstellungen der Weimarer Moderne mit ihren Fabriken, Vergnügungsorten und ihrer Armut bekannt geworden. Die Literatur der Neuen Sachlichkeit schließt an Werke von Émile Zola und Alfred Döblin an mit deren detailgenauen und im Falle von Döblin überzeichneten Beschreibungen urbanen Alltags. Die Literat*innen der Neuen Sachlichkeit – dazu gehören beispielsweise Erich Kästner, Joseph Roth, Hans Fallada oder eben Irmgard Keun und auch Gabriele Tergit – erschufen mit ihren schonungslos realistischen, aber gleichzeitig einfühlsamen Innenperspektiven mehr als nur ein

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detailgetreues Abbild einer Epoche. Sie schafften es, ein Stück Lebensgefühl zu konservieren, ohne dabei besonders ‚gefühlig' oder gar romantisch zu werden. Denn was hier nachgespürt werden kann, ist die Lebenswelt einer verlorenen Generation, die zwischen Akkordarbeit, Konsumlust, Hunger und Herrenmenschentum – meist vergeblich – ihren Weg suchte. Die Erzählungen der Neuen Sachlichkeit sind insofern auch immer Geschichten des Scheiterns, der Ausweglosigkeit, die den Autor*innen wohl schon Anfang der 1930er-Jahre deutlich geworden ist, weil sie ausnahmslos die Gefahr des Nationalsozialismus thematisieren und ihn sowohl in seinem plumpen Terror als auch in seiner chauvinistischen Arroganz freilegen. Die Auto*innen der Neuen Sachlichkeit wollten nicht nur dokumentieren, sie wollten ihren Leser*innen die Augen öffnen für den gefährlichen Weg, auf den sich ihre Generation zu begeben im Begriff war. Sie schrieben gegen das herrschende System und Weltbild an, ohne dabei wirklich politisch zu sein oder utopisch zu werden. Erst im Exil legte Irmgard Keun mit ihrem Buch *Nach Mitternacht* (1937) eine explizite Kritik am nationalsozialistischen Regime vor. Der Roman begleitet eine 19 Jahre junge Frau durch ihren Alltag im Frankfurt des Jahres 1936 und lässt sie über die Unmenschlichkeit des Regimes und die Ausweglosigkeit des Widerstands reflektieren. Keuns erste Bücher wurden bereits 1933 verboten. Gilgi und Doris, die beiden Hauptfiguren der Romane, verkörperten das Gegenteil des nationalsozialistischen Frauenideals mit ihrem Drang zur Unabhängigkeit, ihrem offenen Umgang mit Sexualität und ihren Träumen von einem leichteren Leben.

Doris – „das kunstseidene Mädchen" – erzählt von ihrer Suche nach diesem leichteren Leben und ihrem Scheitern. Ihre Geschichte beginnt bei ihrer Arbeit als Stenotypistin bei einem Rechtsanwalt, den sie mit ihren weiblichen Reizen abzulenken versucht, damit sie die Fehler in ihren Briefen nicht verbessern muss. Als der Anwalt zudringlich wird, schmeißt die ehrliche junge Frau dem Angreifer ihren Ekel verbal an den Kopf und ihren Job hin. Auf dem Weg in eine neue Stadt – Berlin – stiehlt sie noch in der Theatergarderobe, in der ihre Mutter arbeitet, noch einen Pelzmantel, den Feh, der ihr fortan zu einem geliebten Begleiter wird – Freund und Fetisch. Mit diesem Feh, so denkt es sich Doris, könne sie viel leichter ihr Ziel erreichen, „ein Glanz" zu werden – sei es in Form eines Filmstars, einer Künstlerin oder auch nur an der Seite eines reichen Mannes. Doris' Handeln fehlt es an jeglicher Strategie oder Taktik. Denn der Sinn von Handlungen liegt für sie weniger in ihrem Inhalt als in ihrer Form. So bleibt das Ziel „ein Glanz" zu werden unklar. Wichtig ist ihr nur, in diesem Glanz gesehen zu werden. Doris' Weltsicht besticht durch eine beständige Verobjektivierung ihrer Umwelt, ihrer Mitmenschen, auch ihrer eigenen Person. Sie will wahrgenommen werden – mehr nicht: „[I]ch sehe mich in Bildern. Und jetzt sitze ich in meinem Zimmer im Nachthemd, das mir über meine anerkannte Schulter gerutscht ist, und alles ist so erstklassig an mir – nur mein linkes Bein ist dicker als mein rechtes. Aber kaum" (8–9). So naiv, fast tapsig und dadurch lustig, sieht und begreift sie sich selbst und die Welt um sich

herum durch und durch materialistisch. Sie sieht keine Institutionen und Subjekte, zu denen sie sich auf eine bestimmte, einer Norm entsprechenden Art und Weise verhalten müsste, stattdessen sieht sie Symbole, Farben und Formen. Ihre Gegenüber betrachtet sie als Verkörperungen ihres Milieus oder ihres Aussehens: „die Großindustrie", „der Siegerkranz" oder „das gelbe Gezahn". Für Doris besteht die Welt aus Oberflächen und Äußerlichkeiten, die sie bemisst und bewertet: „Das ist gar kein Lokal, das ‚Resi', … das ist lauter Farbe und gedrehtes Licht, das ist ein betrunkener Bauch, der beleuchtet wird, es ist eine ganz enorme Kunst. … Aber das Publikum ist keine höchste Klasse …" (90).

Es kommt ihr insofern wenig darauf an, in Berlin ein bestimmtes Ziel zu verfolgen und daher bestimmte Orte zu besuchen oder Menschen zu treffen. Sie lässt sich treiben und schätzt die Begegnungen, die ihr zu „Glanz" verhelfen. Ihre Menschlichkeit verliert sie dabei jedoch nicht, sondern lebt sie nebenbei. So hilft sie zum Beispiel in ihrer ersten Nacht in Berlin, das Kind ihrer Vermieterin zur Welt zu bringen und begleitet einen blinden Mann durch Berlin, dem sie die Stadt durch ihre Augen beschreibt. In diesen Beschreibungen wird ihre besondere Weltsicht deutlich:

> „Ich sehe – gequirlte Lichter, das sind Birnen dicht nebeneinander – Frauen haben kleine Schleier und Haar absichtlich ins Gesicht geweht. Das ist die moderne Frisur – nämlich: Windstoß – und haben Mundwinkel wie Schauspielerinnen vor großen Rollen und schwarze Pelze und drunter Gewalle – und Schimmer in den Augen – und sind ein schwarzes Theater oder ein blondes Kino. Kinos sind ja doch hauptsächlich blond – ich rase da mit meinem Feh, der ist grau und weich – und ganz rasende Füße, meine Haut wird rosa, die Luft ist kalt und heiße Lichter – ich sehe, ich sehe – meine Augen erwarten Ungeheures …" (102).

Auf diese Art erfährt Doris Berlin und lässt sich von Unterkunft zu Unterkunft, von Gönner zu Gönner und von Rausch zu Rausch treiben. Bis sie schließlich, deprimiert und desillusioniert von ihrem vage gebliebenen Lebensversuch, „ein Glanz" zu werden, Obdach bei einem verarmten, aber ihr freundlich zugewandten Mann sucht, den sie bitten möchte, mit ihr zusammenzuleben, jedoch nicht, ohne ihr Ziel ganz aufgeben zu müssen, denn: „… arbeiten tu ich nicht, dann gehe ich lieber auf die Tauentzien und werde ein Glanz" (218).

Es ist also kein Entwicklungsroman, in dem sich die Heldin gleich dem Trotzkopf gezähmt und geläutert in die gerade Laufbahn der bürgerlichen Ehefrau und Mutter begibt. Es war sicher auch diese Dickköpfigkeit der Hauptfigur, sich nicht belehren zu lassen und anpassen zu wollen, die mir damals, in meinem dritten Studiensemester, gut gefiel. Das war eine andere Frauenfigur und eine andere Frauengeschichte als ich sie bisher in der deutschen Literatur kennengelernt hatte.

Bekannt gemacht mit diesem und weiteren Romanen der Neuen Sachlichkeit wurde ich in einem Seminar der Neueren Deutschen Literatur, die ich damals im Hauptfach belegt hatte. Empirische Kulturwissenschaft studierte ich nur im

Nebenfach, eher aus Neugier, weil ich nach einem Stadtrundgang das kleine Hexenhaus hinter dem Tübinger Schloss entdeckt hatte.

Bis dahin mochte ich mein Nebenfach noch nicht besonders. Im Gegensatz zur Literaturwissenschaft verstand ich hier eher weniger, worum es in den Seminaren eigentlich ging, wenn ganze Sitzungen lang philosophisch aufgeladene Referate über den Unterschied zwischen Sache und Ding gehalten wurden und man in anderen Kursen über die Bedeutung von schwedischem Safrangebäck diskutierte. Während meiner Hausarbeit zum „kunstseidenen Mädchen" sollte sich das ändern. Was mich nämlich an der Erzählung faszinierte, war weniger die „filmische Schreibweise", wie sie von verschiedenen Literaturwissenschaftler*innen hervorgehoben wurde oder das „naiv reflektierende Erzählen" (vgl. dazu Kennedy 2014) oder die Diskussion der gesellschaftlichen Rolle der Frau in der Weimarer Republik – obgleich mich das schon mehr reizte. Es war vor allem Doris' Lust an der Verobjektivierung ihrer selbst und ihrer Umwelt, die ihr jedoch nicht – wie vielen anderen Frauen – passiv widerfuhr, sondern der sie sich auf eigene Art hinzugeben schien und die sie anderen gegenüber – gerade Männern – auch selbst durchführte. Doris machte sich selbst und die Welt herum zu ihrem Lustobjekt. Was hingegen in ihrem Leben eine seltsam menschliche Rolle einzunehmen schien, war wiederum ein Lustobjekt – der Feh, den sie als Freund und Begleiter beschreibt: „Da sah ich an einem Haken einen Mantel hängen – so süßer, weicher Pelz. So zart und grau und schüchtern, ich hätte das Fell küssen können, so eine Liebe hatte ich dazu" (61). So beschloss ich meine Hausarbeit auf die Beziehung zwischen Doris und ihrem Feh zu fokussieren und auf die seltsame Umkehr von Objekt- und Subjektpositionen in der Performanz der Erzählung. Ich suchte also Literatur zu Konsum und Fetisch, zu Mensch-Ding-Beziehungen und zur Geschichte der Verobjektivierung des Weiblichen. Der digitale Katalog der Universitätsbibliothek wies mir den Weg in die Bibliothek des Ludwig-Uhland-Instituts, die ich ja ohnehin schon kannte und in der ich kurze Zeit vorher einen Hilfskraft-Job angenommen hatte. So verband ich meine Aufsichtsdienste mit der eigenen Recherche zu meiner Hausarbeit, stolperte über Karl Marx' Fetisch-Begriff und die „Tücke des Objekts" (Vischer), las über Walter Benjamins Begriff der Aura, von dem ich bereits in Gottfried Korffs Museums-Vorlesung gehört hatte. Ich nutzte auch die Gelegenheit und sprach Korff selbst auf meine Hausarbeit an, der mich ein wenig wegführte von Marx und Benjamin und mich auf neuere Studien zur Dingbedeutsamkeit von Gudrun König und Tilmann Habermas' „Geliebte Dinge" aufmerksam machte. All das brachte ich in die Hausarbeit mit ein und spürte zum ersten Mal den Spaß, Erklärungen zu finden und Bezüge herzustellen zwischen den sich am Gegenstand auffächernden Themenfeldern – hier des Materialismus und der Materiellen Kultur, der Kulturgeschichte der Weiblichkeit, der Wahrnehmung von urbanen Atmosphären und generell des Alltagslebens in der Weimarer Republik. In der Bibliothek sitzend – noch weit weg von Feld- und Archivforschung –, wurde mir aber bewusst, dass die Empirische Kulturwissenschaft mir das bot, was zu erforschen mich offensichtlich mehr reizte

als die Poesie: die Lebenswelten unterschiedlich situierter Menschen in Geschichte und Gegenwart mit ihren je unterschiedlichen Bedingungen und Möglichkeiten, ihr Leben zu gestalten, als sinnvoll zu erklären und sich dabei im Netz der sozialen und materiellen Beziehungen zu positionieren.

Ich studierte noch eine Weile im Hauptfach Neuere Deutsche Literatur und beschäftigte mich dort immer mehr mit populärer Kultur, nach den Abgründen des Alltagslebens in Literatur und Medien suchend. Nach meiner Zwischenprüfungsarbeit über die Rezeption der Fernsehshow „Die Putzteufel" wechselte ich dann aber endgültig mein Hauptfach und wurde EKWlerin. Die Literatur der Neuen Sachlichkeit liebe ich aber bis heute, denn die Romane stecken voller dokumentarischer Anekdoten zur Alltagskultur der Zwischenkriegszeit. Besonders beeindruckt hat mich zuletzt der 900 Seiten starke Familienroman *Effingers* von Gabriele Tergit (1894–1982), die als Autorin zu Lebzeiten verkannt wurde und als Journalistin bestechend aufmerksame Gerichtsreportagen schrieb. Aber das wäre ja wieder eine neue Geschichte …

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John Mainwaring, *Memoirs of the Life of the Late George Frederic Handel*

Sandra K. Dolby

> "In an ideal case, a narrator should be observed over a lifetime to understand the growth and decline of a repertoire, as well as the teller's adaptations to changing communities and audiences. Given the age of both informant and folklorist, another version of this paper might be expected in thirty years . . ."
> (Bendix 1984, 218).

John Mainwaring (1724–1807) was a rector, a theologian, and later a professor of divinity at Cambridge University in England. In 1760—one year after Handel's death at age 74—Mainwaring was instrumental in bringing out a significant publication, a short biography titled *Memoirs of the Life of the late George Frederic Handel*. Not only was this the first biography of the famous composer, but also it is purported to be the first full biography of any musician. Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* was still some thirty years in the future, so Mainwaring was helping build an emerging genre of literature or history. Interestingly, it was not clear that Mainwaring was the author of the *Memoirs*—at least initially. The book was published in London by R. and J. Dodsley, along with a catalogue of Handel's works and some critical commentary on them. No author was listed for any of the three parts of the book. It was not until sixteen years after the biography's publication that Mainwaring was identified as the writer of the primary biographical material—through a later discovery of a request to the publishers from the author—John Mainwaring—for payment of royalties.

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Why did Mainwaring write this biography, what kind of biography is it, and what does it have to do with folklore? Much more recent Handel biographers speculate that the *Memoirs* was written both to commemorate a great man who had just recently died (April 14, 1759) and, perhaps more pragmatically, to build up support for the 1760 oratorio season that might otherwise have languished without Handel's involvement. Since the later 1730s, Handel had moved from writing Italian operas to composing oratorios in English, including such works as *Saul, Israel in Egypt, Messiah, Samson, Joseph and His Brethren, Solomon, Judas Maccabaeus,* and *Jephtha*. Handel had gradually lost his eyesight beginning in 1751, and by the beginning of the 1753 season he had enlisted the help of his former student, John Christopher Smith, Jr., in presenting the oratorio performances. It is Smith, Jr., who is credited with supervising the production of the *Memoirs* manuscript and likely with enlisting Mainwaring as author of the biographical material. Ilias Chrissochoidis, in the editor's "Introduction" to the 2015 edition of Mainwaring's book, speculates that Smith Junior perhaps "hired Mainwaring to record the rich oral tradition on Handel." (p. 5) The publication was evidently a rushed project.

There is no evidence that Mainwaring ever interacted with Handel. Much of the biography was, as David Hunter suggests, most likely derived from "the recollection by the Smiths of what they had been told by Handel." (2015: 421). The two Smiths, father and son, had both worked with Handel over a period of forty years, and they, along with a number of other friends of Handel, very likely "provided someone with the information that would form the basis of much of Mainwaring's *Memoirs*." (Burrows, 2012: 483) Sources do suggest that Handel was a gregarious person who enjoyed conversing with friends at pubs or especially at dinners, and he frequently vacationed at health spas where the exchange of stories was a primary form of entertainment. Handel's friends had ample opportunity to hear his stories. Two close friends—Charles Jennens and Anthony Ashley Cooper, Fourth Earl of Shaftesbury—even added stories in the margins of the first printed copies of the biography. It seems clear that there were plenty of stories about Handel circulating orally well before Mainwaring's hurried efforts to write a biography.

The content of the biography section is of two sorts. Much of the first three quarters of the text is a string of anecdotes tied together by tangents or expansions that keep the chronology intact. The last quarter is a more straightforward recording and discussion of events and performances that filled the last twenty to twenty-five years of Handel's life, information that could be gleaned from public sources. However, it is the first part, the collection of anecdotes about Handel, that is the real treasure here. Even Mainwaring admits the value of the stories in his closing paragraph: "But for his [the author's—i.e., Mainwaring's] industry in collecting them, such as they are, they would probably have been lost in the course of a few years." (Mainwaring 2015 [1760]: 82). So, Mainwaring was faced with the challenge that folklorists encounter over and over again: If the folklore is not collected, it will be lost. But there is another issue here as well. These were oral stories. Except for the few written narratives added to the printed biography by Jennens and

Shaftsbury, the stories were circulating yarns with all of the slippery traits that characterize oral narratives, including the question of an original source.

My own focus as a folklorist has been the oral personal narrative, especially as represented by the kind of short, single-episodic stories that were collected by Mainwaring about his subject, George Frideric Handel (see Dolby 2008). However, as a professional folklorist with modern recording equipment, I have been able to collect stories directly from the people who had the experiences and created the stories. Though such stories do indeed display many hallmarks of folklore, we do at least know with whom they originated and often how that individual has changed the story through various retellings. Mainwaring had neither advantage. He was dependent, at best, on second-hand stories, and very likely on versions that had been repeated, perhaps by a mix of tellers, in a variety of contexts over a long period of time. It seems clear that Handel himself was responsible for first telling some of the stories, especially those that have to do with his childhood, his teenage years in Germany, and his four years in Italy as a young man. In other words, the stories that narrate experiences before Handel began his long life in London, must have been, initially at least, personal narratives created and shared by Handel, perhaps in a variety of settings with the usual changes that happen in response to context and audience. For those stories, Handel is the one who created the plots, tone, and character of the person then known as Georg Friederich Händel. [Mainwaring's spelling of Handel's name on the cover of his book was slightly off from the spelling Handel adopted when he took British citizenship in 1727: George Frideric Handel].

Acting as a kind of folklorist-for-hire, Mainwaring collected the stories that appear in his book. He left no record of how he accomplished this task. It is generally assumed that he interviewed the two Smiths and perhaps others, taking down careful notes in longhand and later expanding them into written texts—all of this likely over a period of several months just before publication of the book on April 24, 1760. More recent Handel biographers have faulted Mainwaring for various inaccuracies, but of course he was, at least in this part of the biography, simply recording what he was told, or so we must assume. Despite Handel's fame in his own lifetime, there are few letters, for example, that biographers might consult. These circulating oral stories are the backbone of what is known of Handel's personal life. And, happily in my opinion, many of the stories seem to reflect Handel's own skill in storytelling, his artistry as raconteur.

The *Memoirs* includes approximately twenty anecdotes, all related in third person and scattered throughout the first part of the book. Some of these same anecdotes are found as well in William Coxe's *Anecdotes of George Frederick Handel and John Christopher Smith*, published in 1799. Coxe's book was published primarily as a tribute to John Smith, Jr., who had died in 1795, and it is likely that the anecdotes about Handel were collected from Smith by the *Anecdotes* author. Coxe's versions of the shared anecdotes were not taken directly from Mainwaring's book. Time and transcribers made a difference then, just as they do now. Nevertheless, the stories in either case continue to display the hallmarks of Handel's own narrative gifts. He

knew how to make a bit of biographical material into a good story. Like most well told personal narratives, Handel's stories were clearly structured with an aim toward an impressive ending—a punch line quip as in a joke, an ironic twist as in a legend, or a telling outcome that displays a valued character trait as in so many personal narratives.

It is clear from their reoccurrence in Coxe's book that some of the stories Mainwaring collected remained in oral circulation, or at least in the memories of Handel's contemporaries. One of the most often repeated stories is what we might name the "chasing after the chaise" story. This story is found in just about every subsequent biography of Handel, and it is even the primary narrative underpinning an illustrated children's book—*Handel*, by Ann Rachlin, published in 1992. The young Handel, age seven, had entreated his father to allow him to travel with him to the court at Weissenfels, where Handel's much older half-brother worked for the Duke. This request was denied, but Handel ran after the chaise his father was travelling in, and some way out of town, he was taken into the coach grudgingly by his father and spent time at the court, seeking out the chapel organ, impressing the Duke with his playing, and being rewarded with a bag of gold and told to study music. Handel's father was cast as something of a villain in the story; he wanted Handel to study civil law, not music. Handel's own telling of the story must have included this striking portrait of a child determined to follow his own path and his life-long devotion to making music.

Other stories include one of Handel hiding a small clavichord in the attic of the large family home in Halle and sneaking up at night to practice. Or, from a later period when Handel lived in Hamburg, we encounter the story of a duel fought with his friend Johann Mattheson over which of them should direct the orchestra at an opera. In Mainwaring's account, Handel is saved when Mattheson's sword hits "the friendly Score, which he accidently carried in his bosom." In a review, Mattheson countered that his sword actually struck Handel's coat button and shattered, but, again, the folded music score makes a better story. A story from Handel's years in Italy involves a masquerade party where Handel in disguise plays the harpsichord. Domenico Scarlatti heard him and exclaimed that it could only be the "famous Saxon [Handel], or the devil." A London narrative depicts an exasperated Handel picking up his prima donna Francesca Cuzzoni and telling her (in French) that he is Beelzebub and that he intends to throw her out the window. These and similar stories have the ring of local character anecdotes, with ironic, exaggerated, or quip-like endings. Such entertaining anecdotes dominate in the first part of the biography, and it is clear that most had been circulating for several years, many of them perhaps growing more popular as Handel's celebrity came to include even such legendary material as the famous barges of bewigged musicians playing "Water Music" for King George the First on the River Thames. To my mind, Mainwaring gave the field of folklore studies one of its earliest collections of oral anecdotes—a treasure trove of amusing and telling bits of biography intended for public consumption.

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Stanley Kubrick, *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*

Sebastian Dümling

When I moved from a small town in Holstein to a *Mittelstadt* (middle-sized city) in Lower Saxony in 2003 to study Cultural Anthropology, this new town, Göttingen, seemed like a metropolis to me. One of the reasons why Göttingen impressed me even more than, for instance, Hamburg, was the existence of several art-house cinemas in the town. I did not even know whether there was such a thing in Hamburg. In any case, these art-house cinemas were for me the evidence par excellence that I was now in a metropolis, even in a university town. After all, for me the logical conclusion was that towns where strange old black and white movies with subtitles are shown must be university towns.

Here in Göttingen, I also encountered an unfamiliar and strange social world. A world where I encountered social figures, such as students, lecturers, professors, who behaved very strangely. The strangest thing about them was that most of them were convinced that this city was the center of the world. My first immersion in this world triggered two feelings: I felt distinctly strange, yet I desperately wanted to be part of it. Somehow, I knew that this was a world I could *love*, precisely because it was so *strange* to me. Remarkably, one of the first movies I saw in the art-house cinema to perform a *doing studentness* was about exactly that: about strange love ... and about science.

Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. What a strange title for a movie! Actually, Stanley Kubrick was no friend of cryptic titles: *Spartacus* is about Spartacus, *2001: A Space Odyssey* is about a space odyssey in 2001, *Barry*

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Lyndon is about Barry Lyndon, *Full Metal Jacket* is about full metal jacket bullets in warfare. *A Clockwork Orange* may be an exception, but it does not count because the title is taken from Antony Burgess' 1962 novel. *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) also had a template, Peter George's 1958 novel, but the novel's title was *Red Alert*. Thus, Kubrick chose his title deliberately.

Many things about the *Dr. Strangelove* title seem cryptic, starting with the doctor's strange name. In addition, one wonders: Who is the *I* who is learning here? Does the *I* mean the strange doctor? Does it mean us, the audience? Is it that something a movie character says? Does the *I* mean the West, the East, humankind in general (after all, on the plot level, the movie is about the Cold War exploding)? And finally, one asks, is it possible at all to love bombs?

But the title is not as cryptic as it seems. If one reads it more closely, it indicates programmatically what we are about to see. Moreover, the phrase already fulfills the minimal conditions of a narrative: a status changes through time, and this change is somehow connected with a conflict (of a moral, ethical, or economic nature). In other words, every narrative is about the encounter of the familiar with the strange.

The title makes it unmistakably clear that we are dealing with a love story, not a war movie. The term *love* appears twice in it. More specifically, it is a movie about a *strange love*. But what does *strange* mean? The word *strange* describes something out of place and completely alien. Merriam-Webster explains that the term's earliest documented occurrence signifies someone or something "not native to or naturally belonging in a place: of external origin, kind, or character." A fish in the desert is strange. A man on the moon is strange. Finding oneself in a city that has an art-house cinema is strange.

So, the movie is about the fact that a strange situation exists and that someone is no longer afraid of this strangeness but—on the contrary—loves it. Reading it this way, the viewers could expect a very humane narrative program: it is probably also a form of strange love when a Jewish priest on the brink of the desert embraces sick outcasts and declares his unconditional love for them—very strange.

As in every narrative, the main plot point in *Dr. Strangelove* is about boundaries being crossed (Lotman 1977). However, these boundaries are initially not ideological, political, or scientific ones. The movie's core is about crossing the *boundaries of love* or, more precisely, the *boundaries of the lovable*: Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* deals with the desire for the forbidden, a desire that is, of course, much stronger than the desire for the permitted. This, too, seems to me to be something like a model situation of narrativity—formulated somewhat stiltedly: the cultural heat that narrations release arises when originally homogeneous, autonomous sign classes—the structuralists speak of *isotopes*—heterogenize, hybridize and, like a bomb, explode.

These title announcements are already confirmed in the movie's first scene: we see a military jet in the air being supplied with fuel by a tanker plane through a hose. But how does Kubrick picture this refueling? Here, in perhaps one of the most beautiful but also strangest love scenes in movie history, we watch two planes

making love to each other. However, the two lovers have difficulties to get together 'physically.' Then, from offstage, musical advice is heard on how they—the planes—can finally unite: the score plays Otis Reading's "Try a little Tenderness."

Later, at the end of the movie, we see the outcome of this love: the womb of the B-52 bomber gives birth to the atomic bomb on which Major King Kong, the bomber pilot, races to earth and, thus, we can guess, sets the so-called doomsday machine in motion (the German subtitle translates this with the remarkable word "*Weltvernichtungsmaschine*"). Kubrick shows the end of the world as the result of an *amour fou*. The whole movie contains countless references to the fact that it is about such a fatal *amour fou*. The alarm code used to drop the atomic bomb, for example, is "R for Romeo"—an ironic reference to another couple of lovers who crossed borders, triggering fatal consequences. But it is not just the tanker and the bomber who are intertwined in strange love: the US president speaks in caring paternal love to his Soviet colleague, General Buck Turgidson, who, as his name suggests—*turgid* is colloquial for sexually aroused—, cannot control his affects, must control the military, and a revenant of Jack the Ripper commands a military base. All those very close, very intimate pairings should not be but are.

Finally, there is the top military advisor and inventor of the Doomsday Machine, Dr. Strangelove. He is a German *Kraut* in the war room, the control center of American military power. The audience even learns that the name "Dr. Strangelove" is the translation of the much stranger German name "Dr. Merkwürdig-Liebe." This refers to another strange love affair: the Americans, who defeated German fascism militarily, are now ensnaring the Germans militarily. The same year Kubrick made his movie, Bob Dylan sang something very similar in his song "With God on our side": "The Second World War / Came to an end / We forgave the Germans / And then we were friends."

The historical dimension expressed in the figure of the German scientist Dr. Merkwürdig-Liebe is obvious. Many German scientists involved in National Socialism were welcomed with open arms in the US, most prominently Werner von Braun, who collaborated on the V2 and then planned the launch vehicles for the US moon mission. Speaking of von Braun, V2, and strange love: a few years after Kubrick's movie was released, Thomas Pynchon published his giant of a novel, *Gravity's Rainbow*, on the relationship between the military, German fascism, and the strange sexual desires that produced both. Among other stranger incidents, the novel tells of a GI in World War II who has an erection each time just before the V2 hits London.

However, Kubrick is not concerned here with the politics of memory. Instead, the figure of Dr. Strangelove joins the ranks of other Kubrick figures whose boundless desire always implies destruction. While *Lolita*, *A Clockwork Orange*, or *The Shining* are about the libidinous transgression of morality, decency, and reason, *Dr. Strangelove* takes up a motif that has been part of the core of popular storytelling since early in the nineteenth century: Dr. Strangelove is a *mad scientist* whose boundless desire for knowledge brings destruction (Frizzoni 2004). The character

of the mad scientist has permeated popular culture at least since Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). When the institutionalization of modern universities is complete, and the dream of an omnipotent science is being dreamed of in many places in Europe, Frankenstein is an ideal figure that popular culture uses to work off the growing unease with instrumental reason. Just as a side note, Göttingen also plays a role in this imagination. In Thomas Pynchon's novel *Against the Day* (2006), a conspiratorial community of anarchist mathematicians meets in Göttingen's Prinzenstraße to develop a formula that will unhinge the world order. Pynchon's hero, who learns of this Göttingen conspiracy, incidentally, leaves his US home with a song on his lips, the "Göttingen Rag"—which is too beautiful not to quote:

> Get in-to, your trav'ling coat,
> Leave Girl-y, a good-bye note,
> Then hop-on, the very-next boat,
> To Ger-manee–
> Those craz-y, pro-fessors there,
> They don't ev-er cut their hair,
> But do they, have brains to spare–
> You wait and see!

But back to *Dr. Strangelove*. Essentially, the mad scientist topos is about a form of reason that creates knowledge for the sole purpose of creating this knowledge, as an end in itself. In the process, ethical questions are subordinated to rational totality—if they are relevant at all. The absolute control of nature, Horkheimer and Adorno later argued, had in this way itself become a fetish, an irrational myth, which was then elevated to the status of official ideology in National Socialism.

In this respect, it is understandable that after World War II, the mad scientist experienced a new accentuation. Now, the *mad Nazi scientist* appeared in movies such as *The Yesterday Machine*, *They Saved Hitler's Brain*, *The Flesh Eaters*, or *Dr. Strangelove*. The mad Nazi scientist differs from the classical mad scientist in two respects: First, the Biblical dictum "For they know not what they do," which applies to Frankenstein, does not apply to the Nazi scientist. On the one hand, the cinematic Nazi scientists know that they are creating destruction, that they are building "*Weltvernichtungsmaschinen*." On the other hand, the consequences of their mad research are absolute: Frankenstein, after all, merely created a monster that spread fear in a limited locality. The mad Nazi scientists, on the other hand, produce works threatening to destroy the whole world. Therefore, unlike the classical mad scientists, they are ultimately evil.

To return to the beginning of my reading, *Dr. Strangelove* is about a love that is not allowed to be, about loving what is unlovable. This aporia of love can be grasped more precisely. In my understanding, the movie is about the love of humanity that destroys humanity, or, more precisely, about the love of humanity that produces evil. After all, this is the irony of the Doomsday Machine: to save humanity from its destruction, one invents the machine that destroys humanity. This was anything

but Kubrick's invention. In actual history, this paradox was called *brinkmanship*, politics on the brink of the abyss. According to Soviet and US game theorists, the nuclear first strike was to become impossible because neither party would have survived this scenario.

Kubrick identified the crucial flaw in this indeed captivating logic: the flaw is human. The cynical and at the same time humanistic lesson of most of Kubrick movies, from *Lolita* to *Eyes Wide Shut*, is that it is human defectiveness, its lack of controllability, its love of things that destroy it that makes a human into a human in the first place. *Dr. Strangelove*, then, like most Kubrick movies, can be understood as a tragic love story since Kubrick always made movies about fish that love nothing more than to swim in the desert. To put it in his own words: he doesn't believe in heaven or hell, Kubrick once said. But he does believe in people tearing up hell when they try to enter heaven.

One does not have to share this view—and neither did I when I first saw the movie in the art-house cinema in Göttingen. However, what the movie shows is the foundation on which I stand as a researcher of narrativity: namely, that narrations attack beliefs of purity and authenticity, imaginarily excluding strangeness from their worlds, beliefs, which, in the best case, produce boredom, and in the worst case, politics of annihilation. This seems to me to be precisely where the "essential power and beauty of narrative" (Bendix 1992: 103) lies: narratives transport us to worlds where fishes lie in deserts or where you can love bombs—without having to enter a desert, without having to love a bomb.

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Präsenz

Sandra Eckardt

Während ich die Krümel vom Küchentisch fege, läuft ein Gespräch zwischen Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht und Wolfram Eilenberger (2021) im Radio. Der Literaturwissenschaftler und der Philosoph, Schriftsteller und Publizist unterhalten sich über eine Distanz von tausenden Kilometern, über zwei Kontinente und einen trennenden Ozean hinweg. An sich ist diese Entfernung nichts Ungewöhnliches für ein Gespräch im Medium Radio. Doch die Einstiegsfrage Eilenbergers an seinen Gesprächspartner zielt genau auf dieses weit voneinander entfernt Sein ab. Hat es Auswirkungen auf das Gespräch, dass sie beide währenddessen keinen gemeinsamen Raum teilen? Gumbrecht ist überzeugt davon, dass es „Einfluss auf die Art und Weise, wie wir denken" hat, denn „wir sind uns im wörtlichen Sinne nicht präsent" (Gumbrecht und Eilenberger 2021). Es wäre anders, wenn sie „am selben Tisch säßen" (ebd.). In der sonntagnachmittäglichen Küche lauschte ich bislang nur nebenbei dem Radio. Jetzt bleibt der Abwaschlappen liegen und das Radiogespräch erhält meine volle Aufmerksamkeit. Ich bin neugierig darauf, welche Facetten die Abwesenheit leiblicher Präsenz, das nicht direkt an einem Ort Sein können – wie es in der pandemischen Zeit erfahrbar ist – im Gespräch angerissen werden. Eilenberger und Gumbrecht werden versuchen, den „Bedeutungsraum von Präsenz auszuloten" (ebd.).

Das Gespräch der beiden, von mir bislang nicht weitergehend rezipierten Autoren, bringt mich thematisch zu dem, was mich besonders am Forschen in unterschiedlichen Lebenswelten reizt. Es ist das Lesen von aufeinander bezogenen, nebeneinander oder aneinander vorbeilaufenden nonverbalen Handlungen und Bewegungsabläufen in Alltagssituationen, die sich manchmal, wenn sie derart

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verinnerlicht sind, zu Choreografien verdichten. Es ist ein vielfach habitualisiertes Wissen in Bewegung, dem sich die Beteiligten oftmals nicht bewusst sind. In der Visuellen Anthropologie suchen Forscher*innen mit dem Konzept der Kamera-Ethnografie, entwickelt von Bina Elisabeth Mohn (2015), Zugang zu diesem impliziten performativen Wissen. Dabei geht es nicht allein um das Greifbarmachen des beobachteten Wissens im Feld. Die Art und Weise der eigenen Bewegungen mit der Kamera und der anschließenden Montage des Materials werden „[…] in die ethnografische Formulierungsarbeit konstruktiv einbezogen […]“ (Mohn 2015: 173). Und auch wenn keine Kamera im Feld dabei ist: Wissende Körper der Forschenden und der Beforschten sind bei der Lesart nonverbaler Wissensbestände einander präsent. Vor diesem Hintergrund weckt die im Radiogespräch gestellte Frage, wie die Gesprächspartner *ohne* Präsenz miteinander in Austausch treten, meine Neugier.

Im wortgeschichtlichen Sinne bedeutet „Präsenz“, so Gumbrecht, „vor jemandem sein, vor etwas stehen“ (Gumbrecht und Eilenberger 2021). Auf dem leiblichen Teilen eines Raumes fußt die Entstehung von „Präsenz“. Damit ist Präsenz also unweigerlich verbunden mit einer räumlichen und einer leiblich-körperlichen Dimension. Ich bin nun ganz und gar ‚Ohr‘ und befinde mich in einer weiteren Facette von „Präsenz“ (ebd.), auf die der Literaturwissenschaftler eingeht. Es ist das „ganz im Moment Sein“ als eine Form des „erhöhten Wachseins für die Gegebenheit der Dinge“. Eilenberger begreift sie weniger als eine räumliche Dimension, sondern vielmehr als eine zeitliche. Und zugleich, so fährt er fort, gibt es gar keine Zeit für die Person, die „ganz im Moment“ ist (ebd.). Denn sie ist ganz in der Gegenwart, so Gumbrecht (ebd.), und erfährt damit zugleich eine besondere Intensität. Im Moment zu sein ist ein Idealzustand von Präsenz: Wer ganz im Moment ist, ist fokussiert. Während Eilenberger über das Aufsuchen von Stille einen Weg zum „ganz im Moment sein“ beschreibt, findet der Literaturwissenschaftler und bekennende Fußballfan Gumbrecht einen gegenteiligen Zugang dahin. Er sucht danach im lärmenden Raum des Stadions, inmitten einer Vielzahl von Anderen (ebd.). Im sich Aussetzen des Anderen liegt für ihn die Voraussetzung für Präsenz (ebd.). Als Teil der Geräuschkulisse, der Bewegungen Vieler, im Auf und Ab aus Begeisterung, Enttäuschung oder Hoffen auf das nächste Ereignis auf dem Platz erfährt und erspürt er Präsenz, bis hin auch zu Momenten großer Intensität. Intensität ist für ihn ein Prozess, der an Räumlichkeit und Gemeinsamkeit im Raum gebunden und der von begrenzter zeitlicher Dauer – der eines Spieles etwa – ist. Aber es gibt keine Garantie für das Entstehen von Intensität im Stadion.

Gumbrechts Erzählung ruft bei mir Erinnerungen an eine andere Sportarena und ihre ganz eigene Form der Intensität, der Pferderennbahn, hervor. Hier war ich an einem warmen Augusttag, vor dessen Sonne mich ein Hut bewahrte. Ich trage sonst nie Hut und erinnere mich gut an das seltsame Gefühl des ‚verkleidet seins‘, als ich mit meiner Begleiterin, die ihrerseits auch einen Sonnenhut trug, durchs Tor trat. Die Kopfbedeckungen bescherten uns freien Eintritt am sogenannten Ascot

Renntag auf der Hannoveraner Bult. Zwischen Pommesbude und Wettannahmehäuschen fanden wir uns alsbald in einer Menge vieler anderer wieder, die dem Motto „freier Eintritt für Ladies mit Hut" gefolgt waren. Eine Performerin unter Vielen Ähnlicher zu sein, ließ mein Fremdeln mit meiner Kopfbedeckung schwinden, denn ich fürchtete keine Blicke, Reaktionen und Urteile Anderer mehr (die im Übrigen ohnehin nicht stattfanden). Zudem gab es in der Gegenwart des belebten Geschehens zu viel zu sehen, und ich war zu beschäftigt, um noch an das, was da auf meinem Kopf saß, zu denken. Noch sahen wir nur ein Meer aus Menschen, aus dem sich hier und da vereinzelt Federn in weitere Höhen absetzten oder kleine Berge aus Spitze und Tüll, ausgehend von anderen Kopfbedeckungen. Von meiner freundlichen Begleiterin lernte ich, dass dies sogenannte ‚Fascinators' sind. Als typische Begleiter an diesem Ort und als vielleicht die minimalistischste Form einer schmückenden Kopfbedeckung waren sie auf dem mit Picknick übersäten Rasen – erinnernd an eine Wimmelbucharena aus einem Kinderbuch – in einer Vielfalt von Ausführungen zu sehen.



(Foto: Sandra Eckardt)

Endlich waren auch die Pferde zugegen. Sie starteten mit bunt gekleideten Jockeys auf ihren Rücken. Menschen, Pferde, Fascinators, Pommesgerüche, das glatte Papier des Wettscheins in der Hand fühlend, sich wiederholende kleine Gewinne meiner wetterfahrenen Begleiterin, das Grün eines gepflegten Rasens, das sich kühl und glatt anfühlt, wenn man auf ihm sitzt, die knallbunten in der Sonne glänzenden

Seidenjacken der klein und zerbrechlich wirkenden Jockeys auf den muskulösen Rücken klemmend und schäumende Pferdemäuler. Die Pferde waren nach ihrem absolvierten Parcours nur langsam wieder zur Ruhe zu bringen, zumal sie sich inmitten einer aufgeladenen Atmosphäre einer Menge von Menschen befanden. Das gegenseitige Spüren und Beobachten, das bis hin zu einem ‚Eins-werden' führen kann, wie es der auf Leiblichkeit ausgerichtete Atmosphärenbegriff des Philosophen Hermann Schmitz (2014) beispielsweise fasst, schien manches Mal bei den Anwesenden regelrecht greifbar und beobachtbar. Eine Vielzahl Beteiligter performierte hier gemeinsam, und ihre Präsenz brachte, auf jeden Fall für mich an diesem Tag, die Entwicklung intensiver Erlebnismomente hervor, die jenseits eines Alltagsgeschehens lagen.

In meinem Küchenradio bringt der Literaturwissenschaftler Gumbrecht seinem Gesprächspartner und den Zuhörer*innen unterdessen nahe, wie sehr das gemeinschaftliche Performieren nötig ist, damit intensive Momente entstehen können. Fußballer*innen im Stadion performieren in Anwesenheit der Zuschauenden (Gumbrecht und Eilenberger 2021). Fehlen die Zuschauer*innen, wie gerade in Pandemiezeiten geschehen, so verhalten sich auch die Spieler*innen – und das zumeist unbewusst – anders. Ihnen fehlt die Performanz der Zuschauenden. Mittlerweile, so fährt Gumbrecht fort, gibt es Studien, die dieses – zumeist unbewusst andere Agieren – zeigen. Im Fußball äußert sich dies beispielsweise am Rückgang der Anzahl der Fouls (ebd.). Ganz nach Erving Goffmans (1998) Bühnenmetapher war die Performanzsituation auf der Pferderennbahn regelrecht sichtbar. Pferdeathleten erspüren den Wechsel von Situationen. Darum wissen nicht nur Pferdezüchter*innen oder Dressurausbilder*innen, die einen ganz individuellen Umgang der Pferdeindividuen mit Wettkampfsituationen beobachten (Eckardt 2023). Auch während der Berichterstattung aus den Tokyoter Olympiastadien ohne Zuschauer*innen während der Corona-Pandemie machten die Moderator*innen auf ein anderes Verhalten der Pferde aufmerksam. Ohne eine sich artikulierende und spürbare Gegenwart eines Publikums (Gumbrecht und Eilenberger 2021) spielen die Spieler*innen, seien es die im Fußballstadion oder in einer Pferdesportarena, anders.

Das Aussetzen des Anderen ist die Voraussetzung für das, was Gumbrecht als Präsenz bezeichnet. Aber es ist keine Garantie für einen gelingenden „gemeinsam einsetzenden Prozess der Intensität" (ebd.). Auch eine Vielzahl an Beteiligten und die spezifisch auf „Crowds" – wie es Gumbrecht (2020) auf neutrale Weise in Bezug auf eine große Anzahl Menschen ausdrückt – ausgerichtete Architekturen wie Stadien sind keineswegs zwingende Voraussetzung zur Entwicklung und zum Gelingen von Intensität. Auch in kleinerem Rahmen, etwa in einem Zweiergespräch, kann diese entstehen. Als sich der Moderator Eilenberger eloquent bei seinem Gast für dessen „Geistesgegenwart" in einem weitestgehend körperlosen Gespräch bedankt, bemerke ich, dass ich einen Aspekt im Gespräch vermisse. Als visuelle Anthropologin interessiert mich nicht allein der Moment der Intensität, der in der leiblichen Gegenwart Anderer entsteht oder auch nicht. Mich interessiert vor

allem auch wie*,* auf welche Art und Weise, sich Präsenz nonverbal äußert. Beim Ausloten verschiedener Bedeutungen von Präsenz angesichts ihres vielfachen Fehlens im Pandemiegeschehen waren ihre nonverbalen Aspekte gar nicht so sehr Thema des Radiogesprächs.

Dass das Nonverbale, seine Performanzen und die damit verbundenen und unbewusst eingeübten Wissenspraktiken eine bedeutende Erkenntnisquelle nicht nur für die ethnografische Forschung, sondern auch in anderen Lebensbereichen sind, erlebte ich mit Beginn des Lockdowns eindringlich. Im März 2020 führte ich ein Telefonat mit einer Mitarbeiterin aus einer Verwaltung. Es ist ein Gespräch, das durch den erst wenige Tage währenden Lockdown noch persönlicher auszufallen schien als sonst. Aus unserer Unterhaltung ging hervor, welches Interesse mein Gegenüber grundsätzlich am Lesen von Menschen hat. An dem Tag blieb ihr nur meine Stimme. Über die Telefonie losgelöst von übriger körperlicher Präsenz der Kund*innen fiele ihr die Arbeit nicht leichter, so schilderte sie mir. Während wir uns über ihre persönlichen Interessen an menschlichen Begegnungen und ihren im Laufe der Berufstätigkeit entwickelten Methoden austauschten und ich ihr von kulturanthropologischen Forschungsmethoden erzählte, die den ihrigen teils so ähnlich sind, entfuhr ihr ein Satz. „Jetzt habe ich doch den Computerbildschirm so an die Stelle gedreht, an der Sie jetzt normalerweise sitzen würden." Sie lässt ihr Gegenüber immer mit auf den Monitor schauen, erläuterte sie mir, weil das Gespräch dann effizienter abliefe. Zudem könne sie auf diese Weise ihre eigene Interpretation des Gesagten noch einmal überprüfen, während sie dann im Gesicht ihres Gegenübers lesen kann. Ihr fehlte die nonverbale Kommunikation. Seufzend schloß sie: „So, also, ich hab' den Bildschirm jetzt wieder zu mir gedreht." Ihr Blick fiel nun wieder auf die beiden leeren Stühle ihr gegenüber und der Monitor gehörte ganz allein ihren Augen. Präsenz wird umso spürbarer, wenn sie fehlt.

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“The Signifying Monkey,” as Read by Roger D. Abrahams

Moritz Ege

The 2019 Netflix film *Dolemite Is My Name* follows the career of the failing comedian Rudy Ray Moore, portrayed by Eddie Murphy, and his unlikely rise to success. Moore (1927–2008) became famous in the 1970s by taking on a stage persona named Dolemite, a pimp-and-bad-man figure who excels at vulgar verbal boasting in a heavily stylized African American speech variety. Moore performed as Dolemite on stage, on records, and in low-budget movies that were part of—and mocked—the “Blaxploitation” wave of the 1970s. Dolemite himself is not Moore’s invention, but a figure from a narrative poem that circulated in African American areas in the US South and, later, North, like the famous Stagger Lee. In the film, Moore learned the Dolemite toast from a homeless man named Rico, who declares himself to be a “repository of Afro-American folklore” in the film. For collecting his material and enticing his informants to share from their “repository,” Moore ventured to the tents of his rough-living informants, used a tape recorder, and paid his informants small amounts of money—not unlike academic field workers. “This is the same kind of material that Roger D. Abrahams has published in *Deep Down in the Jungle* and *Positively Black*,” observed the reviewer of one of Moore’s albums in the *Journal of American Folklore* (Evans 1973).

A highlight of the 2019 film is Dolemite’s nightclub-stage performance of the “Signifying Monkey,” the famous narrative poem or “toast” (“a long narrative poem constructed with the highest wit and performed only by the best talkers,” mostly in pun-oriented rhyming couplets; Abrahams 1970: 59). Early recordings of the

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"Signifying Monkey" date from the 1940s. In the toast, the monkey talks the lion—an anti-monkey bully—into attacking the elephant, just for the lion to get beaten up badly. Seeing the lion in his misery, the monkey gloats, celebrating so hard that he falls from his tree and into the lion's reach. In some versions, he manages to talk himself out of this situation, in others, he gets killed by the lion and his fall marks "the end of his bullshitting and signifying career." This is the ending chosen in Dolemite's version, in which the range of "taboo vocabulary" (Bendix 1995: 100) is explored with a gusto that contemporary audiences seemed to relish.

While the lion may not directly "stand for" the white oppressor, interpreters have long found it obvious that figures such as the Signifying Monkey (or the older Brer Rabbit that emerged during slavery) perform indirect resistance. They subvert oppression in ways that fit with the everyday consciousness of enslaved people. They do so in ambiguous ways, however, partly because these figures link not only to the conditions of the time but also to older—African and African-American—metaphysical systems. According to Abrahams, who had gotten a number of his neighbors in Philadelphia to record the story of the "Signifying Monkey" on his tape recorder in 1958 for his research, the Signifying Monkey is a prototypical trickster figure of African American folklore. Scholars at the time increasingly (again) compared such repertoires to cultural expressions elsewhere in the Black Atlantic, tracing much of it back to West African sources, especially tricksters such as the Yoruba god Esu. As Abrahams explains, "the name 'signifying'" already "shows the monkey to be a trickster, signifying being the language of trickery, that set of words or gestures achieving Hamlet's 'direction through indirection' and used often, especially among the young, to humiliate an adversary" (Abrahams 1970: 66–67). To signify, Abrahams' glossary explains, is "to imply, goad, beg, boast by indirect verbal or gestural means. A language of implication" (264). As literary theorist Henry Louis Gates, Jr.—who, in his own words, "lift[s] the discourse of Signifyin(g) from the vernacular to the discourse of literary criticism" (1988: xi)—pointed out: The fact that speakers of African American vernacular English transformed the standard meanings of the term "to signify" is *itself* an example of the language use that the transformed term is about. They "signified upon" the principle of signification.

Abrahams seems to have been the first academic to define the African American vernacular sense of signifying *as a language*, holistically, rather than understanding it as a more limited rhetorical figure. Gates, famously, then built upon Abrahams' analysis—and authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Sterling A. Brown, and Ralph Ellison—and argued that this sense of signifying was at the core of a (non-academic) *theory* of language contained in the cultures of the Black Atlantic, which stressed the general "indeterminacy of interpretation." In his *The Signifying Monkey*, Gates posited an elective affinity between, on the one hand, Black Atlantic traditions of thought and poststructuralist theory on the other. This also provided a base for much of early rap and hip-hop research.

As a foreigner, I came to all of this through readings in literary and cultural studies within university curricula (Gates 1988) and without (Diederichsen 1993)—and, simultaneously, through the record shelves of friends in the US in the early 2000s that featured old Rudy Ray Moore albums. It was an unexpected crossroads of theory, pop culture history, folklore—and, admittedly, fascinating obscenity and cultural strangeness. I imagine that in US folklore studies degree programs, the story of the "Signifying Monkey" and its readings is showcased in introductory courses. It is, after all, an opportunity where a small discipline can highlight its out-size influence on the development of an anti-Eurocentric, anti-elitist cultural theory. At the same time, of course, it is also somewhat embarrassing as it remains highly sexual and often blatantly sexist material that stems from the poorer sections of a racially oppressed group whose cultural expressions have been exploited, ridiculed, taken out of context, and instrumentalized over generations, so that talking and writing about it almost inevitably provokes the question what (especially white, male) academics are really seeking when they are doing so. Abrahams himself gave an indirect personal answer to such inquiries. He stated that his dissertation—in which he theorizes at length about the problems of young men and the role of women in poor African American communities—"was crucial in working out my own problems in relation to women" (1970: 3). The book is dedicated to "the women who have most affected my life: my wife, Mary; my sister, Marj, and my mother."

There also was an important *political* rationale for undertaking this kind of research at the time. From the 1930s to the 1960s, the existence of African American cultures distinct from the American mainstream—especially ones that contained African elements—was far from consensual among critical intellectuals and social scientists, including African Americans, and the role of the less-than-respectable Black lower classes—whom white racists caricatured and put on stage with particular glee—even less so. The wave of writings on African American urban folklore in the 1960s and 1970s highlighted the existence and value of a broad repertoire of expressive cultural practices and knowledge. They took "the leap from the sociology of pathos to recognizing Afro-Americans as culture bearers and creators" (Szwed 1971: 394)—though it remained controversial whether, in doing so, they were really doing the broader Black community a favor, or, perhaps, primarily followed their own post-beatnik rule-breaking inclinations that also solidified the stereotypes of a broader public.

Be that as it may: Rather than direct expressions of pathology, folklorists argued, such "street" cultural expressions were to be seen as forms of creativity under unfree conditions. In that context, arguments about cultural continuities are a highly political matter—and, as usual in cultural research, quite difficult to prove. In the West African cultural traditions that influenced the slave populations in the Americas most strongly, trickster gods such as Esu-Elegbara embody principles of disorder that seem closely related to the idea of "signifyin(g)" and to figures like the Signifying Monkey, but they are not associated with monkeys at all. In the Americas,

this association changed, for unknown reasons. The link is thus an indirect one. The Africa–America link is also not the only connection that matters. In Abrahams' and Moore's contexts of Philadelphia and Los Angeles, folklore of this kind is assumed to have come from the US South. Something had happened in the course of migration and urbanization not only to people, but to their lore as well, as folklorists like Abrahams argued. The trickster and hard-man toasts changed: for example, on the level of imagery, through new references to the monkey's fashionable clothing. And in terms of cultural orientations, for the boys and men in South Philadelphia to whom Abrahams spoke, the reckless hard-man type (Stagger Lee, Dolemite) had gained in importance over the trickster type with its indirect ways of acting, which had "had a real place in the antebellum and Reconstruction South" (1970: 69) where direct challenges to the racial-political order were met with direct and often lethal violence by whites. This was different now, especially in the context of a shared sense of "Black Power." The scenarios of "urban" toasts and jokes apparently placed much higher value on the direct challenge to (white) authority. Even the "bad" endings of the "Signifying Monkey" toast fit in a pattern of subtle transformations where the trickster's evasive ways of dealing with power appear to be less resonant with collective fantasies and self-images than the more straightforward strength, meanness, and sexual prowess of the hard-man type. This includes Moore's Dolemite who *performs* the toast of the "Signifying Monkey," but isn't a trickster himself.

Yet there is another psychosexual-sociological layer to Abrahams' reading. It is contained in what the author self-critically calls the "'Mammy family' argument" (1970: 2). According to the standard version, the predominant matrifocal organization of African Americans' lives during and after slavery continued to cause dysfunctions of different kinds in the present. The men were damaged by hostile white society *and*, as an indirect effect, by their mothers who made it clear to them that they neither needed nor respected men in general, the theory goes. Especially in the first, 1964 edition of his book, Abrahams agreed with this contextualization. However, in the revised edition, he argued that there was a "matriarchy" (30) in the South Philadelphia homes of his neighbors, from which male adolescents tended to flee into the homosocial world of playing the dozens (i.e. insulting each other's mothers). It was in those social worlds that the type of folklore collected in Abrahams' book—and staged by Moore and, afterwards, many "bad boy" rappers—flourished. This verbal-rhetorical culture thus emerged through a "rejection of the feminine" (32) on a number of levels. The men, then, were "fixed in a permanent love-hate situation, one that causes a vacillation between violent attraction to and equally violent rejection of women." (78) Simply put: "That this ambivalence remains a psychological problem all through a man's life is strongly implied by the continuing focus on the ambivalent term motherfucker" (32).

Historian Robin D.G. Kelley later wrote a rebuttal to diagnoses of supposed Black pathology in this vein, for which he came up with the hard-to-beat book title *Yo Mama's disfunktional* (1996). It followed numerous challenges to this paradigm

since the 1960s. The problem was apparent to Abrahams as well. In the revised edition of his book, he writes that the "model of the pathological family was largely responsible for my misconstruing certain features of the life I encountered while living in South Philadelphia" (1970: 2).

In this respect and others, questions of misunderstanding and (mis)representation, of ownership and authority, are quite present in Abrahams' text—and, implicitly, in the Dolemite film as well. The fictional Rico, Rudy Ray Moore's Dolemite source, gets paid with a bit of money and "hooch" and then disappears into the night. Abrahams' neighbors in South Philadelphia did not get paid, he claims—although strong drinks were sometimes offered. Many of the men, Abrahams writes, "felt that I was going to make a lot of money on the book and they didn't know if they wanted to contribute to my future" (10). This may sound like sarcasm on Abrahams' side, but they were probably serious about this point. As was, we may speculate, James Douglas, a "veritable storehouse of folklore" (11) who "would think up the most tempting bit of lore and whenever he would see me," says Abrahams, "without my notebook, he would casually walk over to me and rattle it off. Yet when he saw me with my notebook, he would run off cackling. Not even the ruse of carrying a small notebook concealed in a pocket would work, because when he saw me start to get it out, he would rattle off so many things so quickly that I would be unable to get most of them down. This was a grand kind of joke and gave the other denizens of the street a big laugh at my expense" (11). A grand kind of joke, but also a serious act against misappropriations of the kind that Abrahams himself, looking back, admits to.

I am certainly glad that other people shared their knowledge with Abrahams. All of them together have helped people all over the world such as me discover funny, creative, outrageous, and problematic forms of cultural expression and think critically about the social and cultural relationsand hierarchies in which they are embedded—and, to some extent, question our own traditions and biases, desires, and projections. As the readings by Gates and others show, this does not necessarily concern a "white" audience only, since prominent African Americans and people of color elsewhere also benefited from such collections and interpretations. Nevertheless, anxieties about the inequalities at the base of such exchanges and about the politics of selective representations remain—especially today, as racial and gender injustices are being problematized anew and supposedly "extractive" fieldwork among the less powerful has become anathematic. I certainly feel this ambiguity. For readers sensitized by work in this vein, Douglas emerges as the true, silent hero of Abrahams' book. Nevertheless, I would also argue that the fact that all of this—the material, the readings by Abrahams and others, the constellation in which they emerged, and the oscillations between a folk, a blaxploitation-meta-pop, and a retro/heritage paradigm, between ethico-political demands and pure obscenity—continues to attract *and* make people uneasy is a strong indication for its enduring value. I do not think that as readers we are required to take a stand in the imaginary confrontation between the recorders of folklore and the people they

recorded. But the discord between them also makes it clear that there are reasons why this kind of material and these kinds of readings should never sit all too comfortably.

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Felt Connections Across the Indian Ocean: An Ethnographic Encounter with Grand Bassin, Mauritius

Patrick Eisenlohr

Reading key academic texts is of obvious importance for anthropological research. Despite all efforts to generate decolonized and "ethnographic" theory, the intellectual history of the discipline continues to read as a succession of paradigms and figures of thought taken from European and North American philosophy. Nevertheless, it is also clear that the immersion in field situations with their performative aspects and felt-bodily dimensions is of equal, if not greater importance for anthropological research than the reading of such key texts. In what follows, I lay out how not just key texts, but also lived moments in the field can have a decisive impact on the direction of anthropological research. These are moments of aisthesis that emerge in the interplay between, on one hand, conversations with interlocutors in the field along with participation in their lifeworlds, and, on the other hand, memories in the personal life of the ethnographer.

Since the 1990s, the thematic complex of globalization, transnationalism and diasporas has risen to prominence in sociocultural anthropology. The two locations of my field research, Mauritius and the Indian megacity of Mumbai are in the Indian Ocean world, a part of the world that is predestined for research on this thematic cluster like almost no other. In contrast to the Atlantic world, in the Indian Ocean world transoceanic connections through trade and migrations, along with missionary activities and pilgrimage have a very long precolonial history. In

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comparison with the astonishing and similarly long-established transoceanic connections in the world of the Pacific, these Indian Ocean circulatory connections have been characterized by greater volume and density. Insofar, it is not surprising that the Indian Ocean world has been called the "cradle of globalization" (e.g. Moorthy and Jamal 2010: 9). Research on global economic connections, flows of trade and migration with the conflicts and forms of belonging that come along with them make up a major part of scholarly engagement with globalization and diasporas. But felt long-distance connections are equally crucial for belonging to places and societies located on other shores of the same ocean.

On a hot, rainy late summer day at the end of February 1998, members of the extended Hindu family with whom I lived during my first long period of fieldwork in a village in northeast Mauritius took me along on the Shivratri pilgrimage to Grand Bassin. We first drove to the home of relatives who lived in a town about halfway to this sacred lake where some of the young men of the extended family had just stayed overnight, traveling on foot on the way back from the pilgrimage. We, in contrast, were traveling by car, and as we approached the lake on our onward journey, we were soon stuck in traffic exacerbated by the flow of thousands of Hindu pilgrims walking, many of them barefoot, to the lake located in the southwestern uplands of Mauritius. Through the car's windows, members of Hindu organizations who had set up stalls with provisions for the pilgrims served us tea, sweets, and snacks. Often wearing white clothes, groups of pilgrims carried lovingly decorated and sometimes huge *kanvar* with them. These high and large float-like constructions with a scaffolding of bamboo and wood, decorated with colorful ribbons, were one of the causes of the traffic jams on the roads to the lake. Their shapes displayed a broad range of Hindu motifs such as temples and Hindu deities, sometimes along with the animals associated with them, always with a sign displaying the name and home location of the Hindu organization, local club, or committee that built them. Walking the last stretch to the holy site, we saw that this normally rather serene place was crowded with pilgrims who were moving up and down the stairs (*ghat*) between the temples and the water. Congregating on the banks of the lake they were conducting rituals of worship (*puja*) and collected water to be offered to the deity Shiva in the temples of their home communities on return from the pilgrimage. Moving through the crowds and under the cover of large green tarpaulins placed by Hindu volunteers to protect the pilgrims from the rain we offered *puja* at two temples. As it kept on raining, we went to one of the huge tents set up by a Hindu nationalist organization in which pilgrims were given free food. Next door, on a stage set up by the Mauritius Sanatan Dharm Temples Federation, an Indian dance performance was going on.

For Hindus, Grand Bassin is also known as Ganga Talao (Ganges pond). For a long time, legends have circulated about a supposed subterranean connection beneath the Indian Ocean between this Mauritian lake and the sacred river Ganges in India. In a ceremony in 1972, the lake was officially consecrated as Ganga Talao with the aid of a vessel of holy Ganges water (*ganga jal*) flown in with the assistance of the Mauritian and Indian governments. Ever since, Mauritian and globally operating Hindu organizations with major support from the Mauritian government have built up the site into a replica of an Indian Hindu sacred geography. This has involved the building and extending of temples, with the name of the oldest temple referencing the most sacred temple of the famous Hindu pilgrimage city of Banaras on the Ganges in India (Kashi Viswanath Mandir), the construction of *ghat* and in recent years even with the building of a giant 33 meter-high statue of Shiva, the main deity of Ganga Talao, overlooking the entire site, along with another giant statue of identical height of the goddess Durga. Caste rivalry among Mauritian Hindus of north Indian descent has been another driving force in the building of temples and the extension of the sacred site.



Ill. 1: Hindu pilgrims worshipping at Grand Bassin/Ganga Talao. Photograph by the author.

All in all, Grand Bassin/Ganga Talao has emerged as an important Hindu pilgrimage site on a sacred body of water (*tirtha*) that during the annual Shivratri festival draws around 400,000 pilgrims out of a total population of approximately 1.3 million. Even before the building of the giant god statues towering over the site, and even before the political triumph of Hindu nationalism in India, Ganga Talao was a site in which the political dominance of Mauritian Hindus and their connections to official India through Hindu networks manifest themselves in unmistakable ways. The Mauritian state has played a key role in the building and expansion of the Hindu sacred site's infrastructure in a unique way, to which there is no counterpart for Islamic or Christian sites in multireligious and multiethnic Mauritius. During the pilgrimage, high-ranking Hindu politicians visit the site, engage in worship, and give speeches that connect current political issues with Hindu discourses and values. During my visit in February 1998, the prime minister himself, an office that since independence in 1968 has, with a single two-year exception, always been held by a Hindu of Vaish caste background, was struck in traffic with his entourage on the way to the lake. He then spontaneously proclaimed an additional special holiday for Hindus only so they could all have the opportunity to reach the lake in order to perform the pilgrimage. This triggered outrage in much of the press and more broadly among the non-Hindu half of the population.



Ill. 2: View across Grand Bassin/Ganga Talao. Photograph by the author

It is appropriate to understand the Mauritian Hindu state bourgeoisie's diasporic politics based on Hindu connections to India as a strategy to consolidate their power. This strategy stands for the creation of a postcolonial nation in which such communities built on religious origins and transnational networks, Mauritian Hindus being by far the largest and most influential among them, play a central role. In it, political acumen and a drive to empowerment are obvious. Nevertheless, one cannot reduce the expansion of the pilgrimage site along with the ritual and social practices connected to it to such instrumental considerations, even though this often happens in Mauritius. Grand Bassin/Ganga Talao's aesthetic qualities as a place and the felt transoceanic connection the sacred place brings about are more than a means to the end of Hindu political dominance in Mauritius with the kind of nation-building that favors such dominance. The persuasive power of this place operates on another level, as bodily palpable evidence that is largely immune against discursive critique and deconstruction.

Standing with my Mauritian friends at the banks of Ganga Talao that rainy festive day, engaging in worship at the water and with it, I began to understand the power of the sacred place and the pilgrims' love for it in an intuitive and somatic way. The discourses on the sacred Ganges and its putative connection to Ganga Talao did not resonate with me, not even my own fond memories of dawn at Assi Ghat on the river Ganges in Banaras, where I had spent time as a student of Hindi some six years earlier, made the crucial difference. Instead, the power of bodily performance and co-presence made me realize in a visceral way how Ganga Talao, rarely regarded by anyone as undifferentiated from the faraway river Ganges in ordinary times, became one and the same substance with its sacred counterpart in India through the pilgrims' ritual actions. Recalling the problem of transduction, or better transsubstantiation of bread into flesh and wine into blood in the unfolding of Catholic ritual, the consubstantiality of Ganga Talao with its famous north Indian counterpart emerged as the somatically perceivable result of repeated actions that appeared as routinely executed in an almost casual way as they were devotion-fueled. Straddling the boundaries of secular social science with its established ideas of evidence and causality immersed in such somatic knowledge, I temporarily partook of an ontology in which Ganga Talao and the rives Ganges can be, under specific conditions, one and the same substance. Such consubstantiality can be subject to discursive elaboration and be the object of readable textual knowledge. But it only becomes real and therefore effective through aisthesis in conjunction with bodily action, attunement, and discipline. For a while, I had the sense that a felt connection across the ocean became not only palpable but also indisputable in its quality of somatic evidence.

Hindu-Mauritian lives revolve around the juxtaposition of moments of such acutely felt connections across the Indian Ocean, and Hindu-Mauritian rootedness in Mauritius, a creole context whose stark differences to India, the land of the ancestors, are also glaringly obvious. Certainly, a critical social scientist would seize on the ideological charge of such connections, and their role and legitimizing power

in contemporary Mauritian politics whose communalist undercurrents are never far from the surface. In my own work on Mauritius, I have also done so (Eisenlohr 2006). Yet, as my participant encounter with Hindu pilgrimage to Ganga Talao taught me, such politically smart analyses tend to miss what is central to such felt long-distance connections. The diffuse meaningfulness of a somatically palpable consubstantiality of sacred bodies of water separated by vast distances, including thousands of kilometers of ocean, lends a facticity to such connections. Such facticity is neither reducible to textual academic analysis nor political discourse with its ideological dimensions. If anything, such diffuse felt-bodily meaningfulness needs further qualification to be turned into discursive form. As such, the aisthesis of consubstantiality I partook in at Ganga Talao can potentially undergird a broad range of political projects and ethical stances. The loose coupling of aisthesis and politics makes the ethnographic encounter with ritual transduction revolving around sacred water worthwhile in itself. Not only is such ritual transduction irreducible to its possible political affordances and actual political effects. It is also a mode of nondiscursive bodily knowledge that only intense moments of ethnographic immersion can make accessible.

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Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*

Hasan El-Shamy

Before entering Indiana University's Folklore Institute as a graduate student in September 1960, my awareness of the concept of a "motif" was confined to its denotations in the spheres of literature and religious studies. Yet, I acquired the psychological implications of the term "motive" during my studies at the Graduate College of Education in Cairo, Egypt, especially through a textbook titled *Naẓarīyāt al-taʿallum* (Theories of Learning) by Aḥmad Zakī Ṣāliḥ (knowledge of the term "motivation" came at a later stage). My engagement with learning principles continued into my studies at Indiana University.

I first became aware of the folklore term "motif" as a companion to that of "tale type" in the graduate seminar "The Folktale and Allied Forms" taught by Warren E. Roberts, the disciple of the founder of folklore studies at Indiana University, Stith Thompson, who succeeded Thompson after his retirement in 1955. This field of folktale studies was so central to the Institute's program that it was assigned two four credit hours value of the courses required for a PhD degree. I became almost totally submersed into the potentialities of the spheres of these two key folklore terms with the writing of the thesis for my Master's degree, An Annotated Collection of Egyptian Folktales Collected from an Egyptian Sailor in Brooklyn, New York (1964).

As I was once doing some research in the Folklore Library (L41), located within the main Library, Stith Thompson happened to be there (or drop in). He kindly approached and asked me casually in a friendly manner, "How many languages do you read?" I answered, "Arabic, English, and French." (I may have added that I also had an introductory course in modern Persian and in Biblical Hebrew). Thompson

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replied: "You should be able to get by." This brief exchange took place in the early 1960s before my involvement with the study of the folktale and its theoretical tributaries began. For me, at the time, Thompson's question and response indicated the emphasis placed on comparative folklore studies and annotations of texts that require seeking information in a large variety of sources in an equally large variety of languages.

After finishing my first academic year, I undertook a field trip in the summer of 1961 (and follow-ups in 1964 and 1965) to New York city in order to collect "folklore" among Arab immigrants who resided mainly in Brooklyn district. Beside Egyptians, there were Yemenites, Sudanese, Maghrebins (from North Africa) and others of various nationalities most of whom were Moslem males and relatively recent arrivals. The shāmīs/shawām (from the Levant Coast in Syria and Lebanon) were mostly established Christian settlers, many of whom owned grocery shops or similar small businesses on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn, thus bestowing an Arab aura on the locale.

The category of verbal folklore that proved available to me was the story: local happenings experienced by the newcomers in their American environment. These were personal experience narratives, i.e., memorates that were not recognized as a folktale genre then. I was also able to collect some songs and proverbs. After many attempts to persuade my hosts (informants) of the significance of oral tradition, especially the ḥaddūtah (fairy-tale), only Egyptians were willing to try to tell them and have them tape-recorded. Part of the materials collected provided the necessary data for my first major project in folklore research, my MA thesis. The work contained 13 tales some of which were frame-stories with sub-stories. 27 motifs and 13 tale types were identified. One text was identified by both a tale type and an identical motif: "Baba Abdulla," corresponding to tale type 726* and motif J514.3, "Greedy man keeps demanding one more thing from complacent man; at last magically blinded."

At this early stage, my knowledge of Egyptian folktales, typically told in vernacular Egyptian Arabic, assumed that they were strictly Egyptian (although not necessarily Pharaonic) in terms of origin and dissemination. The comparative annotations, however, led to discovering that many of these tales were also known in Europe and elsewhere. For instance, "The Tsar's Dog (Sidi Numan)" (tale type 449) appeared to enjoy worldwide frequency, especially in Gaelic versions recorded in Ireland. Printed texts of this tale were also available in other languages such as French and German (of which I knew very little then) and apparently mainly derived from oral retellings of the tale as found in The Thousand and One Nights. The fact that Archer Taylor who while serving as visiting professor in Bloomington during the early years of my graduate work, read and orally translated for me, as we sat in the main library, the German text of "Baba Abdulla" added to my conviction of the merits of annotations.

My interest peaked when a group of members of the Folklore Institute gathered to celebrate the achievements of Thompson, the father of the Folklore program.

The event included his telling of some significant events in his life. The most influential of these was his writing a letter to his wife about his excitement over the possibility of developing a classificatory system that would encompass folk literary traditions similar to the system that natural scientists had developed for biology. That system was to be a motif index. In his introduction to the published Motif-Index, Thompson wrote: "… if any attempt is made to reduce the traditional narrative material of the whole earth to order … it must be by means of classification of single motifs—those details out of which full-fledged narratives are composed." (Thompson 1955–58: vol. 1, 10).

Considering the fluidity of the use of the word "motif" it may be useful to remember the circumstances within which it has been used. Historically, in European research, the concept of "motif" has been a close parallel to that of "theme." Both words are often used alternately for stylistic appeal. In elite literature, where the use of "theme" dominated, the inquiry into this field is labelled "thematology."

The beginning of my own notion of classifying narrative motifs and generating new additions to Thompson's motif repertoire came as I tried to locate some of the motif constituents of a tale collected in New York (designated later as tale type 470C$, Man in Utopian Otherworld Cannot Resist Interfering: Meddler Expelled): The story of "The Poor Man and His is Bean" is unique both as a tale type and as a motif. The story is made up of several motifs. The first is F133, "Submarine other world;" the second is F769.1, "Town where everything is sold at one price"—though the motif in the tale is not actually selling things at one price. One "prayer upon the prophet" seems to have a fixed value that constitutes a semi-monetary system; thus, two prayers would have twice as much of a purchasing power. Motif F769.1.1, ["Country in which everything is sold for 'prayers'"], proposed then as "… the closest we can get" would have been erroneous. Regrettably, the typewritten thesis did not spell out the proposed derivation. Moreover, within a more inclusive context, the motif then proposed, F769.1.1, would have been nonsystemic and thus inapplicable. Instead a more systemic new motif F179.1$, "Blessings (grace, prayers, etc.) as monetary units in utopian otherworld," was generated as a sub-division of the new motif F179$, "Piety (religious exercise) as a system of earnings (economic) in utopian otherworld."

Thus, in the context of analyzing folk-literature, the motif proved to be a simple unit of measurement (El-Shamy 2011, 2016). On the other hand, it has virtually no limits in number and has a tremendous potential for establishing histories of ideas and determining places of possible origin. By contrast, a tale type is confined to a limited number of units of narrative lore with fairly stable form and contents. The tale type is virtually static—with few variations, as demonstrated in Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson's The Types of the Folktale (1961) and its updating in Hans-Jörg Uther's The Types of the International Folktale (2004).

Another area of expansion is the adoption of key principles from cognitive psychological literature as classificatory devices. My quest in this regard was

influenced by reading Thompson's statement (1955–58: vol. 1, 10) of doubt seeking psychological factors in the folktale: "No attempt has been made to determine the psychological basis of various motifs or their structural value in narrative art, for though such considerations have value, they are not, I think, of much practical help toward the orderly arrangement of stories and myths of a people."

In my view, life in its totality is depicted by a human being as a homo narrans, i.e. in the stories human beings tell. A narrative is a description of life and living; the absence of certain psychological attributes and the dominance of others make a decisive difference in revealing the psychocultural attributes of the specific audience to whom the tales belongs. It will be noted that animal tales are told by humans; and animals behave as humans do concerning social and biological needs that motivate them, such as seeking justice or social dominance, being hungry, preserving their own life, responding to sexual drives, etc.

Due to the fact that Thompson's Motif-Index sought global coverage both geographically and socioculturally, numerous areas were left out or sketchily covered. Consequently, such gaps needed augmentation. Some of the lacunas are based on partial understanding of the specifics of the sociocultural systems among the bearers of traditions. As a native speaker of Arabic, my main concern over the years has been to add reliable data for narratives originating from and historically or contemporarily prevalent in the Arab world. Although the motif indexes I compiled adopt "the classificatory schema devised and applied globally by Thompson," my aim has always been to "adapt Thompson's system to the demands generated by treating Arab-Islamic data, so sketchily represented" in Thompsons work; in addition, my publications also attempt "to expand the scope of application set by Thompson so as to include facets of culture and society other than those explicitly expressed in folk-literature, especially the narrative;" moreover, my work adds hundreds of "key principles from cognitive psychological literature as clssificatory devices" (El-Shamy 1995: I, xiii).

Numerous examples can be cited to demonstrate the need for additions to Thompson's index. For example, the new motif P529.4$, "muhallil-marriage: legal device for reinstating thrice-divorced wife," is a subdivision of the new motif P529$, "Legal aspects of marriage and divorce." Thompson's motif T156, "Marriage for a night to evade law," is a subdivision of motif T150, "Happenings at weddings." The reference Thompson provides: "Chauvin V 45 No. 18 n. 18," refers to the story of "ʿAlaʾ al-Dīn Abū al-Shāmāt" in The Thousand and One Nights in which the theme of the motif does not occur as a happening at a wedding but as a purely legal aspect of planning for marriage and divorce. In this instance, the father of a young woman thrice (and thus irrevocably, according to Muslim law) divorced by her paternal-cousin husband, engages the hero for "marriage for a night" to his daughter. The point in doing so is that the "husband for a night" would divorce his wife after a night spent together (including the consummation of the marriage) so that her previous husband would be legally entitled to remarry her. The new subdivision also includes a companion motif necessary for understanding the first (T156), motif

P529.3$, "Third divorce between man and same wife irrevocable", if she has not been married to another and already divorced.

Similarly, Thompson's motif J2212.2, "Burial in old grave to deceive angel," is further clarified and placed within a broader system of Muslim belief through the new motifs A679$, "Interrogative angels … question the dead at time of burial;" and E751.0.3$, "Tomb-judgment: by interrogative angels. It precedes resurrection." The latter motif is given as a subdivision of Thompson's motif E751, "Souls at Judgment Day." Similarly, motif E545.19, "Addressing the dead," is linked to the wider belief system by comparing it to the new motif V66.0.1$, "Instructing the dead before burial as to how to answer interrogative angels."

With the emerging new fields in folklore scholarship, the "motif" still proves a highly efficient device for text analysis. One such emerging field is "folklore and tourism." It is promoted in such motifs as J1030.1$, "Maturity (growing up, independence, 'individuation') gained by leaving home"; J1077$, "Merits of travel"; J1077.2$, "Traveling allows enjoyment of different landscapes (wonders of the world, scenes, etc.). (Nature tourism)"; and J1077.4$, "Travel as a remedy for emotional troubles (e.g., depression, failure, or the like)."

Also, on the new field of how folklorists are dealing with Covid-19, AIDS and similar pandemics by groups of unsophisticated attitudes, is depicted and, perhaps, explained, by motifs such as C73$, "Tabu: offending sacred person"; V318$, "Fatalism. Belief in predestination, not free-will"; W4.4$, "Piety: believing that only God heals"; and W4.4.1$, "Ailing person forgoes medical treatment declaring: 'God is my only physician!', 'Only God is the healer!'."

As demonstrated above, the "motif" as devised by Thompson is a most efficient tool for analyzing sociocultural phenomena regardless of time-period, location or theoretical orientation. Not only does it guarantee a high degree of specificity, but also establishes connections among seemingly unrelated but germane data separated by time, space, and ideology. It provides the basic conditions for theory-development.

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William Morris, *News from Nowhere*

Timothy H. Evans

I discovered the prose romances of the English writer, artist and political agitator William Morris (1834–96) when I was 14 years old, led to them by a desire to read more stories similar to J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. Compared to Tolkien, such works as *The Well at the World's End* and *The Water of the Wondrous Isles* (once I was used to their medievalist writing style) struck me with the concrete, material beauty of the worlds they created, an impression later born out when I saw the original versions printed by Morris's Kelmscott Press, with designs and fonts by Morris and illustrations by his friend, the Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones. Writing a paper on Morris as a college student, I realized that his prose romances were of a kind with the lovely and meticulous medievalism of Morris and Company (Morris's craft and interior design business), which broadened the perception of art and architecture in Victorian England, based on the study and creative revival of traditional forms, styles, and processes in material and narrative arts. Further pursuing this line of research as a graduate student in Folklore at Indiana University, I understood that Morris's medievalism set the stage for his politics. Morris called himself a communist. His heroines and heroes (his protagonists are often women) achieve a kind of non-alienated and activist humanism, going on journeys and overcoming adversity to create loving communities. Those who drink from the waters of *The Well at the World's End* (1896), Morris's best known prose romance, are given not super-human powers, but the ability to unite people together in enterprises that promote community and benefit the common good. This romantic utopianism is born out explicitly in Morris's 1890 novel, *News from Nowhere*.

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In *News from Nowhere*, Morris was reacting to the mechanized, centralized Utopia of American writer Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000–1887* (1888), which was widely read and discussed at the time. Bellamy's version of socialism comes about through the consolidation of power by corporate oligopolies, until only one is left, essentially a kind of state capitalism. Production of goods is mechanized and controlled by the state. Bellamy's Utopia predicted such twentieth century phenomena as electronic media and credit cards. This was anathema to Morris.

By contrast, Morris's post-revolutionary England is a decentralized, agrarian communism without classes, state, private property, or money, in which most goods are manufactured locally (albeit with small scale trade), and the arts are performed or created locally, with no large scale printings or reproductions. Most services are offered freely, to the best ability of individuals, in a spirit of reciprocity. Morris's Utopia, while clearly influenced by Marx, was also influenced by "medievalist" social reformers such as John Ruskin, who saw small scale communities, local control of production, and pride in craftsmanship as central to a just society, and saw a romanticized medieval community as the model for this. Although Bellamy's Utopia may have been more predictive of many developments in the twentieth century, Morris's was hugely influential on "small is beautiful" ideology, and on the interest in local tradition and craftsmanship in many areas, from Folkloristics to the Arts and Crafts Movement to Ghandi's emphasis on local craft production as a way to resist imperialism.

The novel's narrator (who clearly is Morris himself) goes on a journey, much like those in his medievalist romances: first from 1890 to the twenty-first century, and then up the Thames, from London to Oxfordshire, through a transformed England. (One of the first things the protagonist notices is how clean the Thames is; later he comments that there are more birds than in 1890.) Along the way, the protagonist comments continually on local landscapes, architecture, craft production, and social customs, often with quite detailed descriptions. These were the very things that Morris noted in his own travels and described in many essays (including his Icelandic travelogue, as well as his many essays about British craft and architectural traditions, and the cathedrals of northern France). The landscape of Nowhere is no longer shaped by an effort to dominate nature, but rather to live in harmony with it. One of the narrator's Nowherian friends, reflecting on the pre-revolutionary past, tells him, "Was not their mistake once more bred of the life of slavery that they had been living—a life which was always looking upon everything, except mankind, animate and inanimate—'nature,' as people used to call it—as one thing, and mankind as another? It was natural to people thinking in this way, that they should try to make 'nature' their slave, since they thought 'nature' was something outside them." (367)

Much of the travelogue in *News from Nowhere* amounts to a kind of ethnography of Utopia. Descriptions of society and details of daily life are conveyed through interviews with characters encountered along the way. Since this future has broken free from industrial capitalism, local traditions are free to blossom unfettered, and

Morris's descriptions of small scale farming, building techniques, murals, architectural ornaments, woodcarving patterns and local dress (among many other things) can be quite detailed. Along the way, he also describes education, marriage, family structure, gender roles, and other issues in a way that is equally local and ethnographic. Traditions are local, but not binding on individuals, who can move between communities: "… there is no unvarying set of rules by which people are judged …" (240) Elsewhere, he is told that by ending nations and nationalism, humans are able to express and appreciate variation: "You will find plenty of variety: the landscape, the building, the diet, the amusements, all various. The men and women varying in looks as well as in habits of thought; the costume far more various than in the commercial period. How should it add to the variety … to coerce certain families or tribes … [into] nations, and stimulate their patriotism—i.e., their foolish and envious prejudices?" (268)

Observing a series of public murals based on fairy tales, the narrator comments, "I scarcely expected to find record of the Seven Swans and the King of the Golden Mountain and faithful Henry, and such curious pleasant imaginations as Jacob Grimm got together from the childhood of the world, barely lingering even in his time: I would have thought you would have forgotten such childishness by this time." His host, after commenting on their beauty and describing other similar arts, replies, "It is the child-like part of us that produces works of the imagination." When the narrator responds that he feels himself in the "second childhood of the world," the response is, "Yes, and why not? And for my part, I hope it may last long." This is a "second childhood" in which "art" is a universal, not a category of cultural capital that is best appreciated by the educated: "that which used to be called art, but which has no name amongst us now, because it has become a necessary part of the labor of every man who produces. … sprung up [from] people, no longer driven desperately to painful and terrible overwork, to do the best they could with the work in hand—to make it excellent of its kind, [awakening] a craving for beauty." (319)

News from Nowhere describes a kind of folklorist's Utopia. Morris's ideal society is one in which "mastery is changed into fellowship," (401), because it privileges the local and the traditional. "Traditional" to Morris did not mean a strict adherence to the past (indeed much of Nowherian culture is an explicit rejection of the capitalist past), but rather an adherence to the local, the place-based, to non-elite aesthetics, to oral tradition and the hand-made. "Art" is not about static objects but about artfulness in everyday life. From the viewpoint of the outside observer, the interest is above all in the specific, the quotidian, the material—and in practice, in the ways that creation of specific things brings about the creation (and transformation) of culture, and vice versa.

William Morris's distinct (and inseparable) combination of story-telling, craft revival and activism, motivated by a vision of revolution inextricably intertwined with a populist idea of art and creativity, created an ideological foundation for the Arts and Crafts Movement, and also for the interest in, revival of, and celebration

of folklore, especially in the English speaking world, and in material culture: crafts, visual art, architecture. This was a kind of alternative to the nationalist ideologies that motivated so many folklorists in the nineteenth century (also a kind of Utopianism), and to evolutionary theorists who saw folklore as a survival of earlier cultural stages.

Morris was influential on the values of and politics of folklorists, but we cannot escape the irony of his position. Morris became a communist from a position of privilege: inherited wealth (his father was a wealthy businessman who made his money by investing in mining) and an Oxford education. His firm Morris and Company has been hugely influential, but in its time it had a largely wealthy clientele, because only the wealthy could afford its beautiful, handmade furniture, textiles, stained glass, ceramics, wall paper designs, etc. This is, of course, one of the contradictions of Folklore Studies: whatever the politics of folklorists, they have tended to be educated elites studying, celebrating, advocating for, and representing non-elite and oppressed communities. Morris himself was aware of this contradiction, and increasingly devoted himself to political agitation and the organization of trade unions and cooperatives, albeit his efforts were funded with money from his wealthy clients. Many folklorists have striven to use their privilege in the struggle for social justice.

Reading Morris's prose romances as a teenager, I was attracted by the beauty and adventurous spirit of his narratives. Re-reading him in my sixties, it strikes me that his vision of a better world in which fellowship, social justice, everyday creativity, and respecting the natural world are central values has guided me through much of my work as a folklorist, however well (or poorly) I have achieved it. It is a Romantic vision, which is constantly tempered by the ethnography of everyday aesthetics. It is Utopian, but is guided by a respect for the local and a balance between community tradition and individual creativity. To use twenty-first century language, it envisions a society which resists alienation, and bypasses the global in favor of the glocal.

Utopianism has long been part of Folklore Studies, from the romantic nationalism of Herder and the Grimm Brothers to Morris's medievalism, to the Works Progress Adminstration folklorists in the US in the 1930s, and others. Such Utopianism may seem hopelessly romantic to some, but in this world of climate change and creeping fascism, it is vital to maintain a vision of alternatives. If Folklore as a discipline is to remain relevant, folklorists must demonstrate a willingness to participate in this vision. But of course, it must be a critical Utopianism.

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Edward P. Thompson, Die ‚moralische Ökonomie' der englischen Unterschichten im 18. Jahrhundert

Michaela Fenske

Plötzlich war sie wieder da, die Rede vom Mob. Sie wurde gebraucht, als am 6. Januar 2021 während der Bestätigung der Ergebnisse der amerikanischen Präsidentschaftswahlen wütende Anhänger*innen des damals noch amtierenden Präsidenten Donald J. Trump den Sitz des amerikanischen Kongresses stürmten. Deutsche und internationale Medien beschrieben die Protestierenden gleichermaßen als Mob, als aggressiv-irrationale Menge, als ungebildet und deviant. Das im historischen Diskurs verbreitete Wort Mob schien mir bis dahin zumindest in seiner pejorativen Verwendung fast unüblich geworden zu sein (im Gegensatz zu seiner eher positiven Konnotierung etwa als Flash-Mob). Doch es erwies sich, ähnlich wie bei seinem Gebrauch durch die Elite im Zuge der Durchsetzung der Moderne, als ungebrochen nützlich. Der Begriff ermöglicht nämlich Distanz und markiert moralische Überlegenheit.

Mir erschien die Zuschreibung als Mob für die Protestierenden auf dem Kapitol beim Betrachten erster Fernsehbilder aus den USA unbefriedigend. Der Begriff erklärte nicht das, was ich sah. Auf dem Bildschirm verfolgte ich einen choreographierten Protest, der sich gekonnt nationaler Symbole bediente und sich medial überaus wirksam inszenierte. Eindrücklich war etwa die Performanz von Jake Angeli. Mit seiner Körperbemalung und seinem Kopfschmuck – er trug eine Biberfellmütze mit Büffelhörnern – schien er direkt dem 19. Jahrhundert entsprungen. Unwillkürlich musste ich an die theatralischen Formen des Protestes der von mir vor über 20 Jahren erforschten Waaker Bauern denken (Fenske 1999).

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Und sofort fiel mir das damals für mein Verstehen historischer Akteur*innen so wichtige Konzept der *moral economy* des englischen Sozialhistorikers Edward Thompson ein (1980).

Thompson hatte seine Zunft Anfang der 1970er Jahre dazu aufgerufen, statt vom ‚Mob' zu sprechen, die sozialen Logiken der Proteste der englischen Armen des 18. Jahrhunderts als in ihrem Kontext sinnhaft zu verstehen. Ihm selbst wäre die Übertragung seiner Überlegungen auf die amerikanischen Januar-Proteste 2021 vermutlich unangenehm gewesen. Als überzeugter Marxist galt seine analytische Schärfe dem Verstehen der sich formierenden englischen Arbeiterklasse und damit einer sozialen Gruppierung, die sich für gewöhnlich im traditionellen politischen Spektrum ziemlich auf der entgegengesetzten Seite der heutigen Kapitol-Stürmer*innen befindet. Aus meiner Sicht bedarf es heute jedoch in besonderem Maße der Re-Lektüre dieses Klassikers englischer Sozialgeschichte gerade im Angesicht solcher und anderer popularer Proteste. Thompsons Aufsatz über die Legitimitätsvorstellungen englischer Unterschichten zu Beginn der Moderne lese ich vor allem als, übrigens durchaus auch politisch motivierte, Forderung, die Logiken der Anderen zu verstehen.

Gleich zu Beginn seines Aufsatzes lädt Thompson zu dem hier interessierenden Perspektivwechsel ein: Brotkrawalle wollte er nicht länger, wie bis dahin in den Geschichtswissenschaften üblich, als „einfache Reflexe auf ökonomische Stimuli" verstehen, als Empörung über hohe Preise und durch den hungernden Bauch bestimmte Handlungen (67). Er plädierte vielmehr dafür, die historischen Akteur*innen bei der Verteidigung ihrer „traditionelle[n] Rechte und Gebräuche" mit zu verfolgen (69). Die Protestierenden ließen sich demnach von Normen und Verpflichtungen leiten, die ihnen den Zugang zum Grundnahrungsmittel Brot auch in Notzeiten ermöglichten. Ihre Aktionen gegen Händler, Müller und Bäcker waren daher auch stets zielgerichtet und in der Verfolgung dieser Ziele zudem überaus diszipliniert. Dabei stellten die Auffassungen der werdenden Proletarier*innen gewissermaßen das komplementäre Gegenstück zum Paternalimus der damals herrschenden Elite dar. Die *moral economy* der Armen fußte letztlich auf verbreiteten Rechts- und Gerechtigkeitsvorstellungen, die Grundlage auch vormoderner Machtausübung waren. Herrschaft legitimierte sich durch Einhaltung dieser Vorstellungen. Müller und Bäcker dienten dem Gemeinwohl, indem sie für ihre Mühen gerecht, zugleich aber den Möglichkeiten der meisten Menschen angemessen, entlohnt wurden. Zur Sicherung der Subsistenz der Menschen sollte Getreide zudem nicht exportiert, sondern unmittelbar dort, wo es produziert wurde, auch vermarktet werden. Auch die von mir untersuchten Waaker Bauern und Bäuerinnen handelten gemäß einer solchen Moral, die den einzelnen Familien unter den schwierigen Produktionsbedingungen der Vormoderne das Überleben sicherte.

Thompson skizziert das 18. Jahrhundert zugleich als eine Zeit des Umbruchs. Ökonomen wie Adam Smith plädierten für ein freies Spiel der Kräfte auf den Märkten. Nicht staatliche oder stadtbürgerliche Regulierung, sondern Angebot und Nachfrage sollten die Wirtschaft bestimmen. Manch konservativer Paternalist fand

das ebenso verwerflich wie die unter regelmäßig wiederkehrendem Preisdruck leidenden Armen. Doch die neuen politischen Ökonomien setzen sich dessen ungeachtet überaus erfolgreich durch. Dabei zeigte schon die historische Erfahrung rasch, dass eine Wirtschaftspolitik ohne Intervention in Gestalt etwa der Regulierung des Binnenhandels, ein von Moral befreiter Markt also, vor allem die Interessen von Besitzenden, von Händlern und auf hohe Preise spekulierenden Bauern, schützte. Dazu passt, dass Gewinnmaximierung in dieser aufkommenden Moderne zum Zeichen von Fleiß und Erfolg wurde. Thompsons dichte empirische Argumentation steckt voller interessanter Detailbeobachtungen, etwa der von der großen Bedeutung eines aktiven kollektiven Gedächtnisses in nicht schriftlichen Gesellschaften. Er lenkt den Blick auf die kluge Informiertheit der ansonsten in den Wissenschaften bis dahin gerne als einfältig stigmatisierten Armen, die nur zu gut um von der Elite geleugnete Kornlager und andere Strategien der Preistreibung wussten. Nicht zuletzt verweist er auf die hohe Bedeutung von Frauen in Lebensmittelunruhen.

Den Text durchzieht die Deutung der Proteste als reflektiert und organisiert wie ein roter Faden. Mit seiner für mich immer noch erstaunlichen Länge liest er sich wie ein nicht enden wollendes, leidenschaftliches Werben. Den bürgerlichen Lesenden der eigenen Zunft, der deutenden Elite, galt das mit immer neuen Beispielen angereicherte, wiederholte Argument für eine neue Perspektive, weg von den mehr verstellenden denn erklärenden Vokabeln wie ‚Mob' als Zuschreibung für protestierende Arme, weg von ‚Aufruhr' als unterkomplexe Beschreibung ihres Tuns, hin zum Verstehen des ihrem Protest inhärenten Sinnes. Diesen Sinn sieht Thompson im Kampf der Armen für Rechte statt für Mildtätigkeit, die ihnen die neue politische Ökonomie später zudachte.

In Deutschland sind Thompsons Überlegungen auch dank Dieter Grohs Ausgabe seit den 1980er Jahren angekommen. Thompsons Arbeiten haben die sich damals entwickelnde Arbeiterkulturforschung und die Erforschung popularer Kulturen maßgeblich beeinflusst, er gilt als Klassiker der Sozialgeschichtsschreibung der 1970er Jahre. Insbesondere das Konzept der *moral economy* als einer spezifischen, in Subsistenzökonomien üblichen Legitimitätsvorstellung ist vielfach interdisziplinär aufgenommen, erweitert und aktualisiert worden.

Als Angehörige der von Thompson so genannten Unterschichten habe ich meine erste Lektüre von Thompsons Arbeiten als ungeheuer befreiend erlebt. Mit seiner empirisch gesättigten Analyse war er nicht nur methodisches Vorbild und vermittelte zentrale Möglichkeiten, historische Proteste zu deuten. Ihm danke ich zugleich ein tieferes Verständnis für mir seit meiner Kindheit vertraute Selbstverständlichkeiten. Denn dass gerade so überaus vulnerable Menschen wie die Armen gute Gründe für das Risiko der Durchführung eines öffentlichen Protestes haben mussten, und dass Preise zum Einkommen, aber auch zu den Bedürfnissen der Käufer*innen passen mussten, war in meiner Familie Alltagserfahrung. Protest war allenthalben gelebte Praxis, die ich als Kind erheblich weniger großartig fand wie als spätere Erwachsene. Noch heute erinnere ich mich

an meine Scham als junges Mädchen angesichts des Zorns, den meine Mutter unserem dörflichen Gemüsehändler angedeihen ließ. Sie hatte mich losgeschickt, Meerrettich zu kaufen, und war, als ich mit einer sehr kleinen Wurzel und leerer Geldbörse zurück nach Hause kam, schnurstracks, mich Widerstrebende hinter sich herziehend, zum Laden gezogen. Wo es denn so etwas gäbe, die Kundinnen nachgerade auszurauben? Sie habe nicht den ganzen Laden, sondern nur etwas Meerrettich für Sauce kaufen wollen! Der Händler wolle die Unwissenheit eines Kindes offenbar ausnutzen, um ungerechtfertigt Profit zu machen. Der Hinweis auf Angebot und Nachfrage als Preisregulatoren beschwichtigte meine wütende Mutter seiner Zeit ebenso wenig wie die in Thompsons Aufsatz beschriebenen Frauen. Meerrettich war für Kundinnen wie meine Mutter in den 1970er Jahren kein Luxusprodukt, sondern üblicher Bestandteil einer den Sonntagsbraten begleitenden Sauce. Es gab einen richtigen, einen akzeptablen, einen gerechten Preis für Meerrettich, der sich wesentlich auf Erfahrung und Gewohnheit stützte.

Thompson lieferte nun ein theoretisches Konzept für solche wohlüberlegten Angriffe auf Händler, für spezifische Praktiken und Auffassungen meiner Verwandten, Nachbar*innen und Freund*innen. Und ich begriff, dass solche den jeweiligen Notwendigkeiten angepasste Praktiken offenbar zum Wesen der Alltagskultur der Vielen gehören. Zugleich verband Thompson in meiner Wahrnehmung die Straßen und ihre Märkte mit den Universitäten als Arenen der Aushandlung von Wissen der Vielen (und nicht nur einer Elite). Dadurch gewannen die Universitäten für mich an Glaubwürdigkeit. Theoretiker wie Thompson haben sehr zu meiner Beheimatung in diesem für mich fremden sozialen Feld der Universität beigetragen. Erst viel später haben übrigens andere berühmte Historiker*innen festgestellt, was bereits meine Alltagserfahrung gewesen war: Dass die von Thompson erstmals als solche explizit für die Vormoderne reflektierten Legitimitätsvorstellungen durchaus in der Moderne weiterlebten (Frevert 2019). Aus Sicht des Fachs, das meine Leidenschaft geworden ist, der Kulturanthropologie (Europäischen Ethnologie/Empirischen Kulturwissenschaft etc.), formuliert Thompson dabei einen zentralen Grundsatz: Es gilt, die Logiken der Anderen zu verstehen. Und nicht nur in meiner Biografie steckt im Anderen auch immer viel Eigenes, im Fremden nur allzu Vertrautes.

Immer mehr Menschen zeigen sich momentan von den Herausforderungen der Jetztzeit, ihren Komplexitäten und besonderen Härten überfordert. Wo wenig Zukunftsgestaltung möglich scheint, gewinnt die Vergangenheit an Gewicht. Der Soziologe Zygmunt Bauman hat diese allgemeine Sehnsucht nach dem aus den Nöten von Heute heraus idealisierten Gestern als ‚Retrotropie' gefasst (2017). Die konservativen Rechten in den USA, die Arlie Russell Hochschild vor einigen Jahren forscherisch begleitet hat, schildern die Grundlage solcher Nostalgien (2016). Sie berichten vor allem über Verluste: Verlust an Einkommen, Besitz, Beheimatung und dem bis dahin die amerikanische Nation verbindenden ‚amerikanischen Traum'. In vieler Hinsicht stehen die Menschen, die im Januar das Kapitol erstürmten, nicht für die Mehrheit der Trump-Anhänger*innen. Beim Sturm auf

das Kapitol waren allem Anschein nach vor allem besonders gewaltbereite rechtsradikale und rassistische Gruppierungen aktiv. Und doch bedienten sie sich bei ihrem Protest überaus gekonnt der unter Trump-Anhänger*innen populären Sprache einer glorifizierten Vergangenheit. In vielen popularen Protesten scheint es derzeit auch um eine Wieder-Beheimatung in als gut wahrgenommenen Zeiten vergangener Größe zu gehen, wo Männer noch Männer waren und das Land (der Anderen) eroberten. Der Weg zurück bewahrt immerhin Würde. Und Würde ist für Menschen, die sonst wenig besitzen, ganz besonders wichtig, wie der soziale Aufsteiger aus dem amerikanischen *Rust Belt* James Donald Vance in seinem autobiografischen Roman *HillBilly Elegy* (2016) schildert.

Wofür Thompson in seiner Zunft geworben hat, die Logik der Anderen zu verstehen, ist gerade für viele von uns heute auch deshalb so schwer geworden, weil wir angesichts vieler popularer Protestbewegungen wie Pegida, Querdenker und anderen im Kern antiliberalen und antidemokratischen Bewegungen spontan eher fassungslos denn am Verstehen interessiert sind. Viele der heutigen Proteste laden eher nicht zum Sympathisieren mit den Protestierenden und zu der in der Arbeiterkulturforschung der 1980er Jahren verbreiteten Sozialromantik ein. Der Empirische Kulturwissenschaftler Bernd Jürgen Warneken hat bereits vor geraumer Zeit darauf hingewiesen, dass wir als Alltagskultur Erforschende uns in Zukunft zunehmend auf „unbequeme, das Überwinden von Angst und Abscheu erfordernde … Annäherung" einstellen sollten (325). Gerade deshalb ist Thompsons zuerst vor 50 Jahren publizierter Aufsatz nach wie vor eine wichtige Lektüre: wegen der hier sichtbaren Leidenschaft und Beharrlichkeit beim Werben für das Verstehenwollen eines für Viele eher ungewohnten sozialen Sinns. Verstehen nämlich ist der erste Schritt zur Überwindung sozialer Gräben. Das ebnet Unterschiede nicht ein, ermöglicht aber bisweilen notwendige Veränderungen auch im Sinne der Bewahrung der eigenen Würde.

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Sarah Franklin, “The Riddle of Gender”

Julia Fleischhack

American anthropologist Sarah Franklin’s “The Riddle of Gender” forms the introduction to Marilyn Strathern’s 2016 book *Before and after Gender: Sexual Mythologies of Everyday Life* edited by Franklin. Franklin worked with Strathern in the Anthropology Department at Manchester University from 1989 to 1993 when Strathern served as the Department Chair. Franklin calls her “my first employer” (2016: xiv). Why do I focus here on an introduction? What can an introduction tell us? Introductions display a particular form of academic writing that give us glimpses of the work that awaits us. They document how we read, interpret, and understand texts of peers and colleagues and give them a meaning in particular ways: our appreciation of the ideas, concepts or arguments revealed in the writing. They (may) display personal relationships towards the topic, field, and to the author’s work. Yet, they can be—or represent—much more, as I will show with Franklin’s writing.

When I learned—through Franklin’s introduction—about the prehistory of Marilyn Strathern’s manuscript for her book *Before and after Gender*, I was deeply moved and affected by the story. Marilyn Strathern had written the manuscript between 1973 and 1974 in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where she had been living since 1969 with her family doing her research. The manuscript had been produced under commission for a new book series in association with the Royal Anthropological Institute (xiv). When the series unexpectedly folded, the manuscript went into storage, where it remained for more than four decades. Franklin even gives us a visual impression of its whereabouts and fate: “The neatly typed completed manuscript was carefully labeled, wrapped in card, bound with string, tucked into a red box, and shelved” (ibid.).

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Being locked up in storage for such a long time, it seems rather unlikely that a manuscript would get the chance of being published after all. It was Sarah Franklin who played a pivotal role in "the (re)appearance of the manuscript" (Strathern 2016: 409) and its publishing in 2016. A fact we learn from Strathern herself in her preface to the book.

The book was retrospectively titled *Before and after Gender*. According to Franklin, the aim was "to mark instead the many transformations in how gender is conceptualized" (Franklin 2016: xiv) and "how gender began to be rethought" (xiv). The initial title of the manuscript (Strathern 2016: 1) was "Men and women," which also formed the topic given by the editor of the series. The latter, for which the manuscript was intended, was Jean La Fontaine, a British anthropologist and professor at the London School of Economics at that time. Aimed at a general audience, the book series' directive was to introduce readers to social anthropological thinking. Franklin's introduction takes the reader on a "guided tour" through the book. Franklin describes the book's particular textual arrangement and representation of diverse sources through lengthy extracts. Thus, we find Strathern's own ethnographic material along with other ethnographies, songs, poems, feminist manifestos, novels, court transcripts, and other scientific studies from literature and sociology. Franklin briefly outlines the structure and chapters, covering topics such as symbolism, stereotypes, roles, marriage, the family household, personhood, sexuality, property, and individual freedom. We learn about Strathern's distinct style of argumentation, "namely how to read cultural forms across each other, and non-European examples against the grain of Eurocentric certainties" (xxxix). Franklin shows us several ways of how to read Strathern's book as an unusual feminist document. She argues that it "offers a more complete theory of gender as a social and cultural form than any other writing from this era and interrogates how 'woman' came to be a question at all" (xiii). She particularly highlights what a four-decades-old manuscript can tell us or "allow us to appreciate," as she calls it, the insights "into changing forms of feminist argumentation, as well as their objects" (xiii). She highlights "Strathern's tactical methods of revealing gender not only as a relation, or a as representation of relations, but as a layering of both and more so we can see how the complex mechanics of gender model social apparatus as a whole not just as a part" (xli). Franklin's engagement with Strathern's early work becomes a vehicle for her own thoughts on the concept and role of gender in today's world, as well as her own work: "Gender, in all its materiality and ubiquity, makes and remakes worlds: gender is a technology of worldmaking" (xlii). We "read" a feminist text through the eyes of another feminist anthropologist (and gender scholar). To quote Franklin: "Insofar as gender is a relation, a set of uses, a set of tools, a way of thinking, a social mechanism, a model of society, a worldmaking idiom, a facsimile, an identity, an institution, or a code, it is also a way of asking questions. In its role as a paradigm for social relationships gender is also a means of questioning categories and

relations, indeed 'that [gender] is used so often [reveals] its potential as a symbol for the idea of relationship as such: the form or structure of relationship"' (xliii).

Without the introduction, no doubt, I would have missed many crucial insights into Strathern's early work. Reading Franklin's careful analysis of its contents, forms of argumentation, thinking, and writings provided me not only with important guidance for my own readings of the book. They also took me on a journey, reflecting on the setbacks and pitfalls one can experience being a scholar, being in academia. Holding the published book in my hands for the first time, feeling the weight of the many pages (of her work literally) that were born out of that original manuscript, now edited and printed, I remember wondering what had happened to it. How can a manuscript of such relevance and size go unnoticed for so long? What had prevented it from being published decades earlier? And even more: what does it mean when a scholarly work of this size disappears for decades from the scholarly discourse? What does a manuscript, in the form of a bundle of several hundred hand-typed pages, look like after 40 years? How has it changed its color, form, and smell over the years, presumably after moving from location to location, maybe even across several continents and climate regions? Regarding its 40 years in storage and Strathern's academic career between continents, that can mean it must have travelled a lot: How have its different surroundings left a mark on it? Where was it stored? In a private drawer or in a folder or box in an attic or basement? Who took care of it? And also: How many other scholarly works experience a similar fate? Every academic (or writer) knows how much work, effort, dedication, and time goes into a publication, an article and, even more, a book of this size. The several work cycles it takes until we have something like a finished manuscript. We all might have dozens of unfinished, half-written manuscripts over the course of our careers, assembled in various folders on different electronic storage systems, but having an almost finished book-size manuscript when the publication plans "fell through" might be unusual, in many ways. We all certainly know about similar cancelled projects and failed aspirations from our own academic career. I was equally affected by how this supposedly formative experience had an impact on the author on a personal level, just being in her situation. What do you feel after two years of working on a manuscript of this size? Is it desperateness, anger, and powerlessness, or just exhaustion? One can only guess Strathern's mixed feelings about the subject. Giving us a small glimpse in the preface, Strathern describes it as "interesting returning to this manuscript, which I cannot have read since the project for which it was intended was abandoned by the publisher" (Strathern 2016: 1).

The story of Strathern's manuscript illustrates the powerful academic regimes that surround us in our work, research, and writing; they document the dependency and interdependency of our work structures and environments. It is not without some bitterness that the journal of HAU and its associated publications and activities, that the publishing company of Strathern's book, shortly after its publication, became a matter of a controversial debate that criticized the misuse of power and troubling work conditions in certain top leadership circles of the project

(namely, around the former editor-in-chief). Sarah Green, who was involved and contributed her expertise as the chair of HAU's External Advisory Board, shares her insight of what went wrong with the project, once considered innovative and exciting, within academic open access publishing (Green 2018). Without going into further detail about this controversy and conflicting narratives, I want to highlight here instead the more subtle "powers" at work that often remain rather invisible and untold.

Despite the troubling circumstances mentioned above, I learned something from Franklin's introduction about what the British feminist and Franklin's life partner, Sara Ahmed, calls "feminist support systems" (Ahmed's research blog "feministkilljoy" offers an additional reading) that became visible in the introduction and writings that framed and accompanied the publication in different forms and ways. To begin with, several parts of the book were written in collaboration with Strathern's mother, Joyce Evans, who was a teacher in women and literature studies for many years, and who had introduced her to many of the historical sources and writers Strathern used in her book. Her mother also helped her by reading and perusing the manuscript (Strathern 2016: 2). What sounds like a rather unusual collaboration from today's point of view, is perhaps a further remarkable feature of the book's social and cultural context.

That the manuscript was finally published after nearly forty years in storage is largely owed to Franklin's efforts. Franklin not only encouraged Strathern to do so, as Strathern herself points out, but also took on the job of editing the manuscript. The book includes an introduction by Franklin and an "Afterword" by prominent gender theorist Judith Butler. Its publication was also celebrated by a book symposium in 2016 with contributions by fellow anthropologists, colleagues, and friends. Among them were Sarah Green, Annemarie de Mol, and Margaret Jolly, whose responses to the book were also published in 2016 in the platform of *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6.3.

I argue that the story of the (re)appearance of the manuscript is not comprehensible without this feminist peer work and writings that were published to honor its belated publication and intellectual merits. I consider Strathern's book an unusual feminist document that highlights forms of feminist support, perseverance, and collaboration. The manuscript was taken care of in different ways; first, by the author's mother, perhaps also supporting her daughter in finding the balance between research and caring for a young family, then later through her colleagues and friends.

Reading Franklin's careful engagement with Strathern's early work left a deep mark on me in that regard, and made me reflect on how much we depend in our work on collegial feedback, input and critique, and the support of colleagues, mentors or "employees" whose comments, support, and encouragement are invaluable for our academic being, creating, and survival and keep us going through difficult times. The support can sometimes take unusual forms and extraordinary

measures. This is the story of an unusual feminist manuscript and feminist care work that I learned from an introduction.

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Zimmermann und Zar: Fast ein Märchen

Rudolf Flückiger

Es war einmal, vor langer, langer Zeit, als ein Medikus begeistert von den „Audienzen" berichtete, die ihm der König Friedrich der Grosse gewährte. Entdeckt habe ich zwei Briefe von Johann Georg Zimmermann (1728–95), geschrieben 1771 und 1786 an einen Ratsherrn Schmid, in *Ärzte-Briefe aus vier Jahrhunderten von* Erich Ebstein (30–38). Fast ein Märchen, und doch von brennender Aktualität, selbst wenn die vom Original übernommene Orthographie antiquiert ist. Und zum Glück für die Nachwelt fühlte sich der Verfasser noch an kein Arztgeheimnis gebunden ...

> Hierauf fragte der König*: d'après quel systeme traités vous vos malades?* Ich antwortete*: Votre Majeste, d'après aucun.* Der König sagte*: mais il y aura pourtant des médecins dont vous aimes les methodes par préférence.* Ich antwortete*: j'aime par préférence les methodes de Tissot, qui est mon ami intime.* Der König sagte*: je connois Mr. Tissot, j'ai lû ses ouvrages et j'en fais un tres grand cas. En général j'aime la médicine, mon père a voulu que j'en aye quelque connoissance, il m'a souvent envoyé pour voir les hopitaux, et surtout les hopitaux des véroles, qui prêchent d'exemple.*
>
> Später: ... ward der König etwas nachdenkend, schwieg auf ein paar Augenblicke und fragte mich mit einem liebenswürdigen Lächeln*: combien de cimetières aves-vous rempli?* Ich lachte auch, und sagte*: Sire, dans ma jeunesse j'en ai rempli plusieuers, mais à present cela va mieux, puisque je suis devenu plus timide.*

Gerade war der Medikus selbst vom Generalchirurgen der Hauptstadt an einem Leistenbruch operiert worden. Er sagte dem König stolz, dass man ihn für die Operation nicht gefesselt hatte, weil „*j'ay voulu conserver ma liberté*". Die Operation

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war gelungen, ohne Narkose, ohne Kenntnis der Asepsis. Und „... *je m'en trouve infiniment bien*", antwortete der Medikus, als sich der König mit viel Empathie nach seinem Befinden erkundigte und bekräftigte: „*ah Vous vous êtes comporté en bon Suisse!*" 252 Jahre später wüsste man als Chirurg gern, nach welcher *méthode* der Medikus operiert worden ist. Doch der König unterzog ihn danach einer eingehenden Prüfung, indem er ihn nach verschiedensten Krankheiten, ihrer Behandlung und über medizinische Geräte ausfragte, offenbar zu seiner Zufriedenheit, denn 15 Jahre danach berichtete der Arzt, er habe den König während seiner letzten Wochen „dreyunddreyssigmal besucht, und diese Besuche dauerten von einer halben bis zu vier Stunden nacheinander".

Wir erleben einen König auf der Höhe – seiner und unserer Zeit. Er ist souverän, auch als Patient. Dem Schicksal ausgeliefert, aber ergeben, unterhielt er sich, „wenn er nicht litt", mit seinem Sterbebegleiter über „tausend merkwürdige Dinge". Heute versuchen wir, diesem unserem endgültigen Schicksal zu entgehen und vertrauen uns einer Heerschar von Fachleuten an, deren *système* hoch entwickelt und technisiert ist. Sie tragen weisse Schürzen und sprechen in Begriffen, die der griechischen und lateinischen Sprache entstammen. Kompetenzcluster, Gruppen von selbstbewussten Fachleuten, die sich gegenseitig in ihrem Wissen und Wirken bestärken, Widersprüche und Kritik abwiegeln und Meinungen ignorieren, die ihren Konzepten widersprechen: Wir begegnen ihnen durchaus auch in anderen Sparten und Gesellschaften.

So ist auch der Schreibende seinem System verhaftet, aus dem er, selbst wenn er noch tausendundeine Nächte Bücher läse, kaum mehr ausbrechen kann. Wie sich in Geisteswissenschaft, aufbauend z. B. auf de Saussure, Bourdieu, Husserl, Schütz, Berger, Luckmann und Regina Bendix eine Wirklichkeit konstruiert, so lebt er in einem Gesund- und Krankeitskonzept, das sich seit Hippokrates und Galen über namhafte arabische, indische und chinesische Ärzte, Hebammen, Kriegschirurgen und Barbiere, die grossen Universalgelehrten bis zu einer Hundertschaft von Nobelpreisträger/-innen in die mikroskopischen und biochemischen Nanosphären weiterentwickelt hat. Unvermittelt erhält das 235 Jahre alte Diktum des Königs Aktualität: „*Votre remède a bien de l'esprit. C'est un courrier médicinal qui va directement à l'endroit de sa destination. Depuis deux mois je n'ay pas été soulagé comme je le suis tout ce matin*."

Aufkommt hier dieser zweideutige Begriff der *patient-based* oder *personalized medicine*. Die einen denken dabei (nur) an den *courrier médicinal*, ein im Labor generiertes Molekül, einen Antikörper, einen Rezeptorenblocker oder gar ein Gen, die dem menschlichen Organismus zugeführt werden, auf dass sie an genau berechneter Stelle ihre Wirkung ausüben, eine Krebszelle am Wachstum hindern, einen entzündlichen Prozess oder ein Virus ausschalten oder einen metabolischen Defekt reparieren. Die andern sehen darin endlich die Idealvorstellung verwirklicht, dass die Mediziner den kranken Menschen als Person ganzheitlich mit seinen Eigenheiten, Wünschen, Fähigkeiten und seinem Umfeld wahrnehmen und die Behandlung seinen eigensten Bedürfnissen anpassen.

Wenn wir glauben, dass unsere Fotografien besser werden, wenn die Kamera mehr Sensoren hat und das Bild aus mehr Pixeln zusammengesetzt ist, wenn die Atomphysiker im Kleinsten nie gleichzeitig den Ort und den Spin eines Elemetarteilchens festlegen können, geht es dem weissbeschürzten *board* nicht besser, wenn es sich darauf beschränkt, seinen *courrier médicinal* in die Blutbahn seiner Kunden zu schicken, um deren Schicksal durch mikroskopische Veränderungen in ihrem Inneren zu verbessern, denn es droht trotz mannigfaltiger Studien und Risikoanalysen, die einer derartigen Sendung vorausgehen, den Blick auf das Übergeordnete, auf das Lebewesen, das es gerade behandelt, zu verlieren.

Es sind die Pflegenden, die heute viel näher am kranken oder gebrechlichen Menschen arbeiten als Ärztinnen und Ärzte, so nahe, wie körperliche Nähe nur sein kann mit all ihren unangenehmen Seiten, mit Schweiss, Ausdünstungen, Mundgeruch, Exkrementen, eingewachsenen Nägeln, Geschwüren und Eiter. Wie weit entfernt davon sind die bedruckten Seiten unserer randomisierten, kontrollierten Studien, die beweisen, dass das eine Medikament, ein Impfstoff, eine Operation wirksamer ist als die andere. Vor der Veröffentlichung landen die Daten beim Statistiker, der dazu die Zahl p errechnet. p ist unser heiliger Gral. p steht für die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass die Nullhypothese nicht erfüllt ist. Eine Zahl p kleiner als 5% ($p<0.5$) bedeutet, dass der *courrier médicinal* mit 95% Wahrscheinlichkeit besser wirkt als das Placebo oder ein anderer zum Vergleich verwendeter Wirkstoff. Mit einem $p<0,5$ geht ein neues Medikament in Produktion, wird ein Artikel in hoch kotierten Fachzeitschriften gedruckt, steigen der Zitationsindex, die Autoren in der Hierarchie, ihr Einkommen und die Evidenz, die wissenschaftliche Beweislage.

Ja, es sieht so aus, als sei die Ärzteschaft eine janusköpfige Gilde. Sie kann die Prognose vieler Erkrankungen verbessern, erwirkt aber wegen gelegentlicher Nebenwirkungen auch neue Störungen und Gebrechen. Sie läuft Gefahr, einseitig nur die anatomischen, metabolischen und biochemischen Aspekte einer Erkrankung in Betracht zu ziehen, nach dem Motto: aus einer Diagnose ergibt sich genau nur die eine Therapie. Gleichzeitig ermöglicht sie ihren Adepten, Ruhm, Ehre und etwas mehr zu erwerben, was viele von ihnen dann definitiv von der Ebene ihrer Patienten und ihrer ursprünglichen Mission abhebt. Es ist dies natürlich eine sehr unfeste Aussage (wie es sich für diesen Rahmen gehört), eine zwar langjährige, aber subjektive Beobachtung, die nicht statistisch untermauert ist. Und ein jedes ihrer Mitglieder würde nach der Lektüre dieser (haltlosen!) Behauptung überstürzt widersprechen ($p<0,5$).

Untergeht bei dieser Sichtweise, dass die Medizin auch kulturanthropologische und sozialpolitische Facetten hat, dass sie beispielsweise Aspekte der Religion, der Herkunft, der Familientradition, der Ernährungsgewohnheiten oder der Umwelt berücksichtigen muss. Nicht jedem Individuum und seinem Umfeld kann dieselbe Behandlung zugemutet werden; nicht ein jedes steht allein vor uns; meist ist es umringt von einer Familie, ist geprägt von den Normen seiner Gesellschaft, der wir vielleicht nicht angehören. Aber wir, hier im ‚Westen', bewegen uns heute in *careland*, wie es Anna Mol in *Logic of Care* (32) mit Bedauern benennt. Den Patienten gibt es

nicht mehr, sondern nur noch den Kunden, der König und mündig sein soll. Er muss umfassend informiert und vor eine Wahl gestellt werden, auf dass er selbst entscheide. Jedoch: welche Wahl hat er vor der Diagnose eines Beinbruchs, eines Krebsleidens oder der mächtigen Empfehlung des *medical board*?

Unser König war privilegiert, aber auch Pionier. Er hat viel über Krankheiten gelesen. Er unterzog den Medikus einer Prüfung, bevor er ihn als Leibarzt einstellte. Dieser musste nicht nur fachlich qualifiziert, sondern ihm intellektuell ebenbürtig sein. Natürlich, es handelt sich um eine Wahl, die sich nur Privatpatienten leisten können. Lassen wir uns nicht täuschen. Es war sicher einfach und lohnend, wenngleich auch eine sehr grosse Verantwortung, sich dem König für ablenkende, bereichernde Gespräche und Kuren zu widmen, zumal dieser seinem Arzt dafür auch noch seine Droschke zur Verfügung stellte. Wie hätte es da beim Medikus mit einem täglichen Gang zu einer sterbenskranken Bäuerin auf der winterverschneiten Alp ausgesehen? Ein böser Hintergedanke täte sich da auf, wollten wir uns hier nicht aufs gute Prinzip beschränken. Aber auch beim Medikus entdecken wir eine moderne Haltung: er hat sich für seine Operation nicht fesseln lassen, d.h., er wollte seine Autonomie nicht aufgeben, die zu erhalten heute das zentrale Element bei der Betreuung kranker Menschen ist.

Für die Behandlung des Königs bedurfte es in erster Linie der Sympathie, ging es um Gefallen und eine intelligente, geistvolle, wenn möglich von den Beschwerden ablenkende Unterhaltung. Der Arzt war mehr Begleiter und Unterstützer im Leid als ein Heiler. So lesen wir, kurz vor dem Tod seiner Majestät: „... sagte mir der König: *je ne puis pas être guéri, n'est-ce pas?* Ich antwortete: *Soulagé, Sire* – und hielt Wort."

Der grosse Unterschied zwischen damals und heute liegt in der Zeit. Nicht in der Differenz zwischen 2023 und 1786, sondern in der Zeit, die der Arzt mit seinem Patienten verbrachte. Heute, in der Ära einer auf Wirtschaftlichkeit ausgerichteten Medizin ist die Zeit für lange Gespräche zu kostbar und wird rationiert. Die Honorare richten sich nach dem materiellen Aufwand. Die Institutionen spezialisieren sich auf ‚rentable' Krankheiten und Behandlungen. Sie präsentieren sich ihren Kunden wie die Anbieter einer ‚Ware'. Unter diesen Bedingungen wird es immer schwieriger, dem Menschen im Patienten gerecht zu werden. Die Kunst jedoch besteht gerade darin, dass man sich von diesem Menschen ein Bild macht und nicht nur von seiner Krankheit. Nur dann ist man in der Lage, auf in einzugehen, mit ihm alle Möglichkeiten und Gefahren zu diskutieren und den für ihn gangbaren Weg zu finden. *Soulager* war die *logic of care* des Medikus: mit dem Patienten den Weg gehen, den dieser zu gehen bereit und in der Lage ist, ihm das anbieten, was ihm Erleichterung verschafft und was möglich ist. Die Medizin hat sich indessen in immer grösseren Schritten weiterentwickelt. Sie ist wirksamer geworden, effizienter und ehrgeiziger. Sie will kurieren, will reparieren, will siegen. Kur steht über *care*, wenngleich dies oft eine Illusion ist.

Johann Georg Zimmermann, der über die Behandlung von König Friedrich dem Grossen berichtete, ist in Göttingen kein Unbekannter, hatte er doch dort bei

einem anderen Schweizer, seinem Lehrer und Freund Albrecht von Haller (1708–77) Medizin studiert. Die Briefe erinnern uns Ärztinnen und Ärzte an unsere eigentliche Aufgabe und an die Wichtigkeit des Lesens. Lesen bedeutet Auflesen, Aufheben, Sammeln, nach Hause tragen, Aufbewahren – im Regal, auf der Festplatte, in der Cloud oder doch im Kopf. Ein Zufall, dass ich diesen verstaubten Band gefunden und aufgehoben habe – vielleicht im Hinblick auf diese Schrift? Unserem medizinischen Nachwuchs fällt das Lesen, das Horten von Literatur und das Korrespondieren über Erkenntnisse schwer. Was früher selbstverständlich war, muss heute als Lehrfach deklariert werden. Die Universitäten bieten den Lernenden Kurse in *medical humanities* an, eine literarische Lese- und Lebenskunde zur Vorbereitung auf ihren zukünftigen Beruf. Sie sollen so erfahren, was nicht im Lehrbuch steht, im Studienplan keinen Platz mehr findet und was sie sonst später erlebend lernen müssen: „die ganze Nichttechnologie", wie Samia Hurst schreibt, „also die begleitende Unterstützung der Kranken auf ihrem Leidensweg, durch Trost, Aufklärung, Präsenz, Symptombehandlung – die Medizin als Halt, wenn der Mensch durch seine Krankheit ins Wanken gekommen ist" (154).

Unsere luxuriös ausgestatteten Paläste der medizinischen Kur ruhen nur zur Hälfte auf dem veränderlichen Fundament der wissenschaftlichen Evidenz. Und es ist erfreulich, dass darin weiterhin sehr viele Menschen bemüht sind, jenes andere, gebrechliche Standbein der humanistischen Prinzipien zu stützen, das unter dem Elan des technischen Glaubens und dem Druck der Wirtschaft nachzugeben droht. Denn von der medizinischen Heilkunst kann nur die Rede sein, wenn beide Säulen das Gebäude tragen. Um es ins Märchenarchiv zu schaffen, müssten wir allerdings alle unsere Patientinnen und Patienten tatsächlich wie Königinnen und Könige, Prinzessinnen und Prinzen behandeln.

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Frank Bunker Gilbreth Jr., and Ernestine Gilbreth Carey, *Cheaper by the Dozen*

Christiane Freudenstein-Arnold

Frank Bunker Gilbreth's, Jr., and his sister Ernestine Gilbreth Carey's autobiographical childhood memories *Cheaper by the Dozen*, first published in 1948, were an international bestseller of the late 1940s. This book, as well as its follow-up, *Belles on Their Toes* (1950), was immediately translated into many languages. The book brings together a series of loosely connected and not chronologically arranged anecdotes from the Gilbreth family. In the early twentieth century, Frank and Ernestine's parents, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, developed a method of time and motion studies based on Frederick W. Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) in order to study the working habits of industrial workers and to improve their work efficiency (Gilbreth 1917). They applied the results of their research to their own family of twelve children.

From the vantage point of two of the elder children, Ernestine and Frank, the book humorously recounts how time was saved everywhere in the family's daily life: in the bathroom, the children were made to learn foreign languages from records, they often skipped school grades, and no opportunity was missed to teach them useful things such as Morse code or typewriting. Just like in the Gilbreths' motion studies, processes were broken down into individual sections in order to avoid actions deemed superfluous. The democratic family council discussed problems, voted together and distributed upcoming domestic tasks, occasionally for a fee: the child with the lowest bid got the job. Mother Lillian also used her limited time effectively by correcting the proofs of her latest book while 'resting' after childbirth.

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It gets particularly funny when Dad Frank arranges for both his and his children's tonsils to be removed in a piecework manner and lets the operations be filmed in order to analyze the efficiency. And finally, in a humorous way, a psychologist who has chosen the Gilbreth family as a research subject on the topic of 'family planning' is fooled.

When the father suddenly dies, it becomes clear how well he has prepared his family to function like a well-oiled machine even without him. The sequel describes how Lillian runs the efficiency consulting company on her own and how the children grow up. The comic effects of the book arise from the discrepancy between the democratic and scientifically based family management practiced by the head of the family and the family reality, which also sees the loving and charismatic commander-in-chief occasionally teased and taunted.

The book's German translation, *Im Dutzend billiger*, was first published in 1949. In the first ten years after its publication, 350,000 copies were sold. In the following decades further editions and several licenced editions appeared; even a *Reader's Digest* edition came out. And it did not stop there: *Cheaper by the Dozen* and *Belles on Their Toes* also conquered the cinema. A first film adaptation of the two books was made by Walter Lang in 1950 starring Clifton Webb and Myrna Loy in the leading roles. This very amusing film adaptation sticks closely to the originals, whereas the 2003 remake in slapstick manner directed by Shawn Levy, with Steve Martin and Bonnie Hunt as parents, is only loosely based on the novel and offers such a successful shallow entertainment that a sequel was released in 2005. And the story of the film adaptations continues: A new Disney production of *Cheaper by the Dozen* is planned for 2022.

Not only the motif of the large family made it into the cinema, the topic of researching and rationalizing household activities is still relevant to the present day. For example, the 2003 Norwegian film *Kitchen Stories* directed by Bent Hamer makes fun of cultural anthropological techniques as carried out in the 1950s in studies of bachelors' kitchen practices. A team of Swedish researchers invades a Norwegian village, and the researchers establish themselves on raised hides in the kitchen of the test subjects in order to observe their daily routines in view of optimizing them. Isak, however, refuses to cooperate with the field researcher Folke, sabotaging the investigation, which is supposed to take place in a form of distant observation, by mostly cooking in the bedroom, making Folke record absurd behaviors, 'torturing' him (who is not allowed to leave his high seat) with the monotonous sound of a dripping tap, and finally even turns the tables by observing Folke himself through a hole in the ceiling. In the end, the two protagonists of the film, which is kept in delicate green-gray tones, break the rules to become friends.

Research methods and results of such pioneers as the two Gilbreths still determines our everyday life today. One example is the forerunner of our modern kitchen equipment. The Frankfurt kitchen, a milestone in domestic architecture, is also based on the ideas of Taylorism. The idea of optimizing work with industrial mass production was transferred to residential construction, where the kitchen

workstation was designed according to ergonomic and practical considerations. On the one hand, the trend to 'rationalize' the household was reinforced by the intention to reduce the time spent in (in terms of economy) unproductive housework, so that women would have more time to work in the factories. On the other hand, emancipatory efforts to improve the status of women, also in the home, called for justification to relieve women of their daily chores and enable them to pursue other interests.

"Readings" that "mattered"? That is a complex question, because for me as a literary scholar, of course, several books have determined my life. Choosing a particular book was a real challenge for me as someone who reads a lot and who is connected to the printed word every day through her job and her passions. Undoubtedly my choice had to be very personal, so the best way was a spontaneous and intuitive choice. It fell straight on *Cheaper by the Dozen*. It is a strange coincidence that the invitation to participate in this Unfestschrift occurred at a moment when I was already reflecting on this topic and had even been making lists of the books which have been particularly important to me: my 'books of life.'

I remember exactly how my mother slipped me the nicely bound volume of *Cheaper by the Dozen*. For me, this book was the transition to other books in the adult world, and it delighted me from the very first line. I probably read more between the ages of ten and twelve than I do today. I read everything I found. After I was 'done' with the usual children's and young adult's books, my mother was able to suggest further readings (my father was interested in archeology and history—subjects that I was not too enthusiastic about). My mother was also a bookworm before her duties as a working mother of three left her with little time for her reading passion. There was a bookshelf in my childhood room filled with her crime novels which I turned to later, and another one with my mother's other books in the hallway. It happened that novels, probably because of their partly erotic content, were considered inappropriate—this problem could easily be solved by swapping the book covers... But that was later, and even further on in my life I discovered the collections of the Goslar library.

Throughout my life I have often returned to *Cheaper by the Dozen* for various reasons. Of course, I wanted to get my daughter excited about this novel, so I read it to her. In fact, I am convinced that the book is to 'blame' for some of my quirks. Time and again, while working in the kitchen, I find myself checking the stages and processes to see whether the sequence of actions make sense. Did I open the cupboard door twice to take out something that could have been done in one go? When I catch myself doing so, I smile at myself and also think fondly of my mother.

In addition, *Cheaper by the Dozen* fascinates me since so many years because I found out more and more about the novel. The great success of the Gilbreths' family stories is due to the description of intact family structures during the unstable period after WW II, when new forms of family life had to be found as the fathers returned from the war, as mothers were increasingly successful in their professional

life, and the family as an institution became the subject of scientific analyses and experiments.

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Es isch emal en Maa gsi

Brigitte Frizzoni

Es isch emal en Maa gsi,
Dä hätt en hoolä Zaa gha.
Und i däm hoolä Zaa isch es Trückli gsi,
Und i däm Trückli isch es Briefli gsi,
Und i däm Briefli isch gschtande:
Es isch emal en Maa gsi
...

Diesen Kindervers in Zürcher Mundart spulten wir als Erstklässlerinnen mit Vergnügen reihum ab, er war in den 1960er Jahren weit verbreitet auf den Pausenplätzen in der Deutschschweiz, kurz und knackig, Vergnügen an der Wiederholung inklusive. Der Verfasser des Kinderverses ist – wie bei Überlieferungen ‚aus dem Volksmund' üblich – unbekannt. Gut möglich, dass eine andere Erstklässlerin zur selben Zeit an einem anderen Ort und mit anderem Dialekt diesen kleinen Vers auch mit ihren ‚Gschpöndli' auf dem Pausenplatz mit Vergnügen reihum rezitierte. Bei einer Aargauer Erstklässlerin würde der Vers laut Gewährsfrau Fabienne Lüthi, die an der westlichen aargauischen Kantonsgrenze, in Oberentfelden, aufgewachsen ist, folgendermaßen klingen:

Es esch emol e Maa gsi,
De hett e hole Zaa gha.
Ond i dem hole Zaa esch es Trockli gsi,
Ond i dem Trockli esch es Briefli gsi,
Ond i dem Briefli esch gschtande:
Es esch emol e Maa gsi

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...

Die Mundarten der Deutschschweiz sind aber nicht nur ‚vo Kanton zu Kanton verschiede'. Der Linguistikprofessor Stefan Sonderegger verblüffte seine Studierenden an der Universität Zürich jeweils mit der ortsgenauen Zuordnung der dialektalen Färbung ihrer Ausdrücke. Eine Erstklässlerin in Brugg würde den Vers laut Gewährsmann David Ammann ortsspezifisch dialektal leicht anders gefärbt aufsagen:

Es esch emol en Maa gsi,
De hett en hole Zaa gha.
Ond e dem hole Zaa esch es Trockli gsi,
Ond e dem Trockli esch es Briefli gsi,
Ond e dem Briefli esch gschtande:
Es esch emol en Maa gsi
...

Als bloße Notate mögen diese dialektalen Varietäten für unvertraute Ohren ziemlich identisch klingen – und tatsächlich vermischen sich im Aargauer Dialekt territorial bedingt vier Dialektgebiete, darunter auch der Zürcher und der Berner Dialekt. Ungefähr bei Brugg treffen mehrere Dialekt-Isoglossen aufeinander (Hunziker 2020). Die Brugger Erstklässlerin ist somit sensibilisiert für feine Dialektnuancen. Das Vergnügen an der Reihum-Wiederholung dieses Verses ist denn auch wesentlich verbunden mit der Freude an der Variation, nicht nur der dialektalen, sondern auch der intonatorisch-sinnlichen, die ‚vo Ort zu Ort und Chind zu Chind verschiede isch'. Diese Freude an der Variation ist ein Merkmal, das populären Genres generell eigen ist. Sie kombinieren Schema und Variation kunstvoll und bieten ihren Leserinnen Erwartbares, aber immer auch Überraschung. Nicht verwunderlich also, dass auch dieser einfache Kindervers in zahlreichen Abwandlungen kursiert. Einige listet Gertrud Züricher bereits 1926 auf, etwa aus dem Baselland (Züricher 1926: 154, Nr. 2409).

Es isch emol e Meiteli gsi,
Das isch in Wald gange.
Döt het's e Chörbli gfunde;
In däm Chörbli isch e Briefli gsi,
In däm Briefli isch gschtande:
Es isch emol e Meiteli gsi
...

Oder aus Wädenswil (153, Nr. 2393)

> Es isch emal en Ma gsi,
> Mit rote, rote Hose,
> Aber jetzt muesch lose:
> Es isch emal en Ma gsi
> ...

Und aus Bern (153, Nr. 2404)

> Es ist einisch e Frou gsi,
> Die het es Hündli gha,
> Du het sie's du nümme welle.
> Söll i's no einisch erzelle?

Immer neue Variationen kommen hinzu, im Jahr 1992 zum Beispiel der Song *Tubel Trophy* der Zürcher Pop-Rockband *Baby Jail*, in welchem das ‚Schema' nur noch vage in der jeweils ersten Zeile von sieben der insgesamt acht Strophen anklingt:

> Es isch emal en Tubel gsi, e richtig miesi Fläsche
> Dä hät gmeint, e helli Huut, das seg e Frag vom Wäsche

Und auch in diesem Song wird eine Fortsetzung insinuiert, so heißt es in der 7. Strophe:

> Es isch emal en Tubel gsi, en zäche und en gsunde
> Dä isch irgendwo, wiit furt vo da, im Dräck verschwunde
> (...)
> Dihei i sinere Beiz, deet händs en zimmli schnäll vergässe
> Und uf sim Platz da isch scho glii en neue Tubel gsässe

Denn selbstverständlich liegt der besondere Charme des Verses insbesondere in seiner potenziellen Endlosigkeit, im Versprechen ‚Fortsetzung folgt', das auch dem seriellen Erzählen eigen ist. Schweizer Zuschauerinnen mit Vergnügen an seriellen Narrationen und Freude am Sound verschiedener Mundarten kamen mit der ersten Schweizer Soap Opera *Lüthi und Blanc* (CH 1999–2007) auf ihre Rechnung, in welcher die Schauspieler allesamt in ihrem eigenen Dialekt sprachen, was für die Deutschschweiz mit ihrer medialen und konzeptionellen Diglossie charakteristisch ist: Die hochdeutsche Standardsprache wird als ‚Sprache der Distanz' in der schriftlichen und der Dialekt als ‚Sprache der Nähe' in der informellen, mündlichen Kommunikation verwendet (Brommer 2014). Doch die dialektale Vielfalt hat auch ihre Tücken und stellt für Schweizer Fernsehproduktionen eine besondere Herausforderung dar: So sprach Mutter Lüthi von *Lüthi und Blanc* zum Beispiel in markantem St. Galler Dialekt, Tochter Maja hingegen in Bündner Dialekt, während Sohn Martin wiederum in Aargauer Dialekt parlierte, was in der Presse als helvetisches Sprachenwirrwarr kritisiert wurde (Frizzoni 2001: 243–244). Die

Programmatik der ‚idée suisse', dezidiert zwischen den verschiedenen Sprach- und Kulturregionen der Schweiz vermitteln und eine "Gemeinsamkeit über alle politischen, regionalen, sprachlichen, konfessionellen und sozialen Unterschiede hinweg" (Steinmann u.a. 2002: 26) fördern zu wollen, konfligierte mit der Plausibilität der Dialektverteilung innerhalb einer Kernfamilie.

In der gegenwärtig laufenden Schweizer Krimiserie *Wilder* (CH 2017–) setzt man daher auf einen Sprachcoach, damit die Serie mit der Berner Kantonspolizistin Rosa Wilder, gespielt von der Baslerin Sarah Spale, sprachlich glaubwürdig ist. Denn Basler und Berner Dialekt unterscheiden sich markant. Sarah Spale wird denn auch explizit auf ihre sprachlichen Künste angesprochen und gefragt, wie sie das bloß schaffe, als Baslerin so perfekt Berner Dialekt zu sprechen. Im Chat zur Serie erläutert die Schauspielerin, dass sie mit ihrem Dialekt-Coach sehr genau auf die Sprachmelodie achte. Zudem singe sie auf dem Velo Songs der Berner Rockband *Züri West*. *Züri West* ist eine ironische Bezeichnung der Bundeshauptstadt Bern, die westlich der größten Schweizer Stadt Zürich liegt. Die hier anklingende Konnotation von Zürich als urbanem, hippem, aber andere an den Rand drängendem Ort spiegelt sich auch in der Beliebtheitsskala der deutschschweizerischen Dialekte wider: Der Zürcher Dialekt rangiert mit deutlichem Abstand hinter dem Berner Dialekt. Die ‚Zürischnurre' wird als arrogant und großkotzig empfunden, während der Berner Dialekt als sympathisch und gemütlich beurteilt wird – weniger Manifestation linguistischer Differenzen als stereotyper Zuschreibungen, wie die Spracheinstellungsforschung zeigt. Mit ihrem Berner Dialekt ist Rosa Wilder somit auch sprachlich eine Sympathieträgerin, genauso wie ihr schrulliger Kollege Manfred Kägi, gespielt vom Berner Marcus Signer, der in der ersten Folge der zweiten Staffel zu ihr meint: "Irgendwie hani di sympatischer in Erinnerig" (53.06–53.11).

Nie hätte ich als Kind gedacht, dass die populären Verse und all die Geschichten und Serien aus meiner Kindheit und Jugend einmal wertvoller Fundus für meine Berufskarriere sein würden: Als Volksschullehrerin in den 1980er Jahren beobachtete ich die reiche Spiel- und Singkultur der Kinder – darunter auch *Es isch emal en Maa gsi* (Stöcklin-Meier 1980: 66, Messerli 1985: 261, Nr. 524). Manche der faszinierenden Engadiner Märchen, die meine Großtanten meinen Schwestern und mir in den Ferien in Celerina erzählten, erkannte ich in den 1990er Jahren im Studium der Europäischen Volksliteratur bei Rudolf Schenda als Varianten der Grimmschen *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* wieder. Meine Lieblingsserie *Raumschiff Enterprise/Star Trek*, die bald Kultstatus erlangen sollte, aber genauso die mit wenig kulturellem Kapital ausgestatteten ‚Schmutz- und Schundheftchen', die Arzt-, Adels-, Heimat- und Liebesromanheftchen meiner Großmutter, die sie rege mit ihren Nachbarinnen austauschte und die ich in den Ferien auf ihrem Kachelofen las, schärften mein Auge für genrekonstituierende Merkmale, für Schema, Variation und serielle Strukturen. Ihre Kenntnis war nicht nur eine wertvolle Grundlage fürs Verfassen meiner ersten Seminararbeit bei Rudolf Schenda zu neueren erotischen Liebesromanheftchen des Cora-Verlags, sondern ist es bis heute auch für viele

Lehrveranstaltungen zu populären Genres und TV-Serien. Auch meine Promotion zu einer unter dem Label ‚Frauenkrimi' rege diskutierten Ausdifferenzierung innerhalb des Krimigenres ab den 1970er Jahren profitierte davon. Und tatsächlich, sogar "es Schpürli Krimi" taucht im Vers mit der Frage auf, was wohl in diesem "Trückli" verborgen liegt und was wohl in diesem "Briefli" steht.

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Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Hamdānī, *Description of the Arab Peninsula*

Andre Gingrich

The "Description of the Arab Peninsula" (*Ṣifat jazīrat al-ʿarab*) by the great Yemeni scholar Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Hamdānī (893–945) has accompanied me throughout most periods of my academic life. In particular, this is true for the following section:

> The slopes of Mount Hinwam are inhabited by five thousand warriors from a subtribe of Ḥāshid. The cereal grown here is sorghum. These slopes are the most affluent of God's soil with regard to bees and honey. A man often owns fifty bee-hives or more, and this honey is worth six raṭl for the Baghdad dirham and seven or eight for the dirham al-qafla. The slopes' inhabitants are courageous and beautiful.

I have translated this passage from the Arabic edition of the *Ṣifa* as published by David Heinrich Müller in the late nineteenth century (al-Hamdānī 1884–91: 194), relying also on Ludwig Forrer's translation into German (1942: 257) of Müller's edition.

A few years after my first fieldwork periods in Damascus, while I completed a doctoral degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Vienna, my first adviser Walter Dostal mentioned in early 1978 that a postdoc position might soon be opened up at the institute he directed. This would imply my commitment for a new regional specialization, i.e. in Southwest Arabian ethnography and cultural history. Requirements were a corresponding dedication to

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fieldwork in the region, and to reading the relevant ethnographic and historical literature about that part of the world. "Read as much by al-Hamdānī as you can," was the final sentence in Dostal's instructions. My professional postdoc career thus began with the admonition by my previous adviser, future director, and subsequent predecessor that "reading matters."

A few years earlier, I had begun to study Arabic in Syria and Austria. This included several university courses, where I first met Johann Heiss in 1976. Reading, translating, and interpreting Arabic was at the core of this lifelong association, and al-Hamdānī soon became a central part of it (Heiss 1998). In the summer of 1980, we jointly visited the central and northern Yemeni highlands. In the winter of 1980/81, I accompanied Dostal during a first joint cooperation fieldwork period in those parts of Southwest Arabia controlled by Saudi Arabia, i.e. in southern Hijaz. In the winter of 1981/82, Heiss and I jointly continued that cooperative fieldwork in southern Hijaz and northern ʿAsīr—partly during Dostal's absence and partly together with him. Then in 1983, Heiss and I completed that sequence of ethnographic sojourns with a joint fieldwork season in Ṣaʿda province of northern Yemen.

These were the late Kreisky years in Austria's post-1945 republican history. As a close ally of Olof Palme in Sweden and of Willy Brandt in West Germany, the head of Austria's Social Democrats, Bruno Kreisky, won his party's majority rule in subsequent federal elections between 1970 and 1983. One crucial aspect in Kreisky's foreign and international policies aimed at strengthening Austria's position of military neutrality by forging closer ties to the association of non-aligned countries of those decades. In turn, this entailed improved relations with Arab and Muslim countries, and Austria's official recognition of the PLO. Dostal was a committed supporter of Kreisky's international orientation, and his advice was appreciated in those governments. During the second half of the 1970s, Dostal had been part of the country's delegation to Riyadh, led by Kreisky's Minister for Science and Research, Hertha Firnberg. Firnberg concluded a Saudi-Austrian bilateral cultural agreement, which *inter alia* led to the joint Austrian-Saudi ethnographic cooperation project from 1979 to 1983.

In his 1979 pilot study in southern Hijaz, Dostal had been deeply impressed by the high significance of local honey production and bee-keeping. He asked me to pay special attention to this aspect of local ethnography of which he knew very little, and I did. Manual bee-keeping indeed played a substantial role within the regional rural economies anywhere on altitudes over 1,500 m above sea level in those "Arabian Highlands" between al-Ṭāʾif and Sanaa. I consulted local experts and accompanied their work. I read the "Book of Plants" by al-Dīnawarī (828–896), who was surprisingly familiar with the Hijazi regions. And of course, I consulted most of al-Hamdānī's relevant texts. At the same time, I also became interested in the text's editorial history and its ramifications. Both aspects will be addressed in the following—the content of the chosen text section, and its more recent publication history.

The section by al-Hamdānī about the slopes of Mount Hinwam and their bee-hives is part of the final, major chapter in the *Ṣifa*. That final chapter was elaborated by the author as the highlight and climax of the entire text, indicated by the chapter's title "The Yemen's wonders." Everything considered by the author as being worth some wider recognition about the Yemen is briefly described in this final chapter of the book. The *Ṣifa* itself was envisioned as a major piece among all of al-Hamdānī's works. Hence the section on the slopes of Mount Hinwam and its bee-hives occupies a conspicuous and privileged position in al-Hamdānī's *opus magnum* and in his work at large.

In this section, the author pointed out the exceptional abundance of honey in a special mountain region of central Yemen. He even indicated some of his rare quantifications for that abundance by two criteria. In terms of bee-hive numbers per household, a man "often owns fifty bee-hives or more". In terms of market rates, a Baghdad *dirham* was worth six *raṭl* (a standard weight measurement unit of about 2.5 kilos or less), and the *dirham al-qafla* seven or eight *raṭl*. This standardized equation substantiated the author's claim that those slopes were "the most affluent of God's soil with regard to bees and honey." The rationale by which this author listed honey from the slopes of Mount Hinwam so prominently among his "wonders of the Yemen" at first sight was money as an indicator of affluence. (In another section, the author listed money as one among three sources of wealth in the Yemen of his days.) Yet simultaneously he implied that his readers from the outset would associate honey as belonging to a special class of rare and precious products.

Honey could only come from a few regions that were especially well-suited for bee-keeping, while these limited supplies always interacted with much higher and wider demands not only on markets in most regions of Southwest Arabia. Moreover, honey from Mount Hinwam (and elsewhere in Yemen) also was an important element in long-distance trade: this is indicated by the author's reference to the coined currency of the "Baghdad" *dirham* (i.e., *drachma*). These high demands were informed by the symbolic and practical values attributed by clients and producers to honey. In the tenth century, honey continued to be a main source for sweetening across all over the Middle East (Gingrich 2006). In itself, a diet was not merely a matter of culinary but also of medical concerns. Moreover, bee products themselves were considered a main remedy (or a main ingredient to that) for several important forms of illness and specific conditions of weakness, e.g. after giving birth. As a local author who would gain the popular reputation and ensuing *nom d'artiste* of being "the Yemen's tongue" (*lisān al-Yaman*), al-Hamdānī was well aware of such widely held values about honey among his readers. This indeed featured an Arab version of the emerging intercontinental relation between "sweetness and power" (Mintz 1986).

In a wider regional sense, al-Hamdānī's text section also includes some basic comparative dimensions relevant for the Yemeni and Southwest Arabian highlands. Whenever al-Hamdānī in his *Ṣifa* refers to a specific region there, he specifies who

its residents are. As in most cases, this is done by clarifying the tribal affiliations of the resident majority, in the Hinwam case a section of the Ḥāshid tribe from the author's own Hamdān federation. As usual, the author neither explicitly mentions members of minorities of either inferior positions (e.g., slaves and Jews or Christians), nor of superior status (e.g., the Prophet's descendants). The widespread existence of these minorities in al-Hamdānī's times is confirmed, however, by other local sources. The armed tribal majority households rely on agricultural production (primarily sorghum) for their basic subsistence, while the honey they produce by bee-keeping is one of those products primarily entering gift and market circulation. If this is true for the exceptional example of Mount Hinwam, then most basic aspects of this description also apply, with variations, but to a far lesser extent, to other fertile mountain regions elsewhere in Southwest Arabia as well. This is a key for understanding core elements of Upper Yemen's socio-economic history in Islamic pre-Ottoman times.

Revisiting this text section not only has consequences for thinking through its tenth-century contents of socio-economic Yemeni history. As already mentioned, the text also has its editorial and translational history in Central Europe of the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. David Heinrich Müller's edition of al-Hamdānī's *Ṣifa* from 1884/91 by and large remains an enduring and highly useful testimony of Arabist philological and historical scholarship from Central Europe. Müller's edition substantially inspired the emergence of South Arabian Studies across Europe and in Vienna in particular. This also promoted the eventual methodological insight that any more detailed interpretation of al-Hamdānī's textual evidence would require improved insights into its regional contexts. In turn, Müller and his main students agreed that this would necessitate intensive research sojourns inside Southwest Arabia—for learning more about real speech practices as well as about actual conditions of life and their respective cultural background. The two decades between 1882 and 1902 thereby became a period of protracted trials and errors in the practical pursuit of these main methodological insights. By consequence, the emergence of ethnographic fieldwork in Vienna had one of its main roots in South Arabian studies at the intersections between Arabic/Semitic philology and the nascent fields of anthropology and ethnography.

Key representatives of developing the ethnographic fieldwork method in Vienna, parallel to Franz Boas (1858–1942) from Westphalia but long before Bronislaw Malinowski (1884–1942) from Krakow, were Müller's students Eduard Glaser (1855–1908; four sojourns in northern Yemen between 1882 and 1894) and subsequently, Marie and Wilhelm Hein (with a joint sojourn in Southeast Yemen in 1901/02). In fact, Wilhelm Hein (1861–1903) also was a secretary of the Anthropological Society in Vienna and the second person in the University of Vienna's history to obtain the *Venia Docendi* in "Ethnography." Marie Hein (1853–1943) co-edited some of her husband's and her own research results together with Müller (after Wilhelm's early demise), and she became one of the first female staff

members at the Natural History Museum's department for anthropology and ethnography. In turn, this department formed the nucleus of the foundation process for Vienna's Ethnology Museum.

Reading indeed does matter: Reading and editing al-Hamdānī's *Ṣifa*, for instance, promoted the emergence of academic and institutional ethnography in Vienna during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century.

These reflections cannot be concluded without mentioning two substantial Swiss contributions to these engagements with South Arabian historical texts and the impact they had. One of them was due to Ludwig Forrer (1897–1995). Forrer was a skilled Swiss philologist and historian of the Middle East who was head of the Zurich Central Library when he engaged in translating the *Ṣifa* into German. David Heinrich Müller (1846–1912) had been one of the most prominent members of Vienna's Jewish community as a knighted member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. When the famous edition prepared by a Jewish scholar was translated during the Nazi years, Switzerland obviously was a safer academic site than Vienna could have been. There, one of Müller's last (and disloyal) former students in office was a certain Viktor Christian, a committed member of the Nazi party and the SS who monitored everything that concerned the local pursuit of Middle Eastern and ethnographic studies between Prague and Graz. Christian did not keep Forrer from receiving the materials he needed for his translation work from other colleagues in Vienna and Graz (as acknowledged by Forrer 1942: VII), but he abstained from supporting it. Nevertheless, Forrer was able to accomplish the translation. The second relevant Swiss contribution came from Regina Bendix. I continue to appreciate her substantial cooperation in pointing out (Gingrich and Bendix 2015) how these most recent episodes of a text's editorial and publication history were embedded in a sequence of contests between enlightened search for truth and innovative insights, against strong currents of imperial, orientalist, colonial, and racist ambitions.

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Alice Walker, "Everyday Use"

Hanna Griff-Sleven

The piece of literature that best describes me as a folklorist and teacher is Alice Walker's short story, "Everyday Use." I assign this story every time I teach an Introduction to Folklore, American Literature or Museum Studies class. The story is narrated by a mother, who is a practical, loving, and hardworking woman, living in a small southern town in the 1970s. It is about many things: it is a family story, an analysis of cultural artifacts, and a riff on the American Dream. As a family story, it illustrates the tension between Dee, a college educated daughter who comes back to her family's modest home down South in order to repatriate some family objects, and her mother and sister. Dee scoffs at her mother and sister who never got the opportunity to go to college and who don't appear to resent it but are happy with the life they built. The story is funny, ironic, and poignant and one that speaks to anyone who had a family home filled with heirlooms and objects.

I remember my first reading of this story and, of course, I was all over the folklore take on the everyday items and their meanings. However, the first time I taught this story, there were students in my class wondering why Dee couldn't display the old quilts and butter churn in her home. Like a thunderbolt it hit me that "Everyday Use" is also a story about becoming American, about how we Americans are always erasing the past in order to succeed through our own efforts. I thought about how Huck Finn has it with "sivilizing" after his adventures with Jim on the Mississippi and decides to head out to the territories, and Sara Smolinsky in *The Bread Givers* who leaves her poor Orthodox Jewish immigrant life on the Lower East Side in Manhattan to go to college and become a teacher, giving up

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access to her mother and sisters for a new, more modern American version of being a wife and mother.

Both of these stories, written in milieus worlds apart, play with the notion of becoming American and in their own way, Huck and Sara, like Dee in "Everyday Use," are working hard to revise their authentic selves once they leave their respective childhood homes. All three characters well understand life where they grew up—for them it is stifling—and in order to change their lives, they believe fiercely that they must strike out on their own. Yet, they also realize that they must find a way to remember the good and the bad as they go forth in the world.

I left my hometown in Massachusetts at age eighteen and went to schools in Iowa and Indiana, found folklore jobs in Iowa, Japan, Mississippi and finally New York, where I have lived for over twenty years. Through this journey, like a good folklorist, I have carried with me my inventory of family stories. Recently, I helped my sister Lois move and she gifted me with a few of our mother's objects that she had taken when we were breaking up the family home along with our brothers after our father died. One of the objects was a Japanese vase with an aqua and pale peach background and a cherry blossom tree in full blooming 3-D relief on the front. Lois said, "Here, I don't know why I took it, I think it's ugly. I can't believe we bought it for Ma and Dad." I said, "That's because we didn't buy it for Ma and Dad. Some very distant relatives from Detroit visited us, and they brought it as a gift for our parents. I can't believe I let you have it all these years. I love it." These relatives came to visit in the early 70s, yes, like the setting of Walker's story. "Oh," said, Lois, "I don't know that story."

This exchange brought a smile to my face and reinforced my folklore sensibility. Lois was there when the cousins came and gave our mother the vase. We were in our early teens and it was the only time this branch of the family had come to visit. Having been "trained" by both grandmothers and my father to observe and listen, I kept this story because curating objects and their stories—well . . . that's a large part of the folklorist's job. We animate the inanimate with the help of a good narrator and, hopefully, our good questions. And in this exchange, we help ordinary things become less ordinary and often, help owners and others understand the fact that sometimes, things have to be left behind.

When I went to Japan to teach at Sanyo Gakuen University in Okayama, I knew maybe about ten words of Japanese. I had a five-year contract and initially I thought I would stay just a year, but from the moment I got to Japan I realized I would stay longer. There was so much to learn about my new country, many beautiful objects to admire and buy and many stories to hear and so many layers of tradition to explore.

The *genkan* or entryway in a Japanese house is where tradition begins. Usually, it is a combination of a porch and a doormat and connects the outside world to the inside of the house. The *genkan* serves as a holding room for guests. This is where people take off their shoes, coat, and other outdoor wear before entering a home. Many people decorate the *genkan* with dolls and pictures since it is the first thing

people see before entering the home and therefore sets the mood of the home. A friend gave me a set of dolls, depicting the Emperor and Empress representing a Heian period wedding; they each had a delicate porcelain head with silk costumes as befitting royalty. I placed these dolls on top of the alcove in my *genkan*. It looked very Japanese. Was I faking it? Did I have a right to set up my house that way? I thought I was being respectful for my new country, although I confess, I did hang a *mezuzah* (a small container or box that is placed on the right doorpost of Jewish homes; inside is a parchment scroll containing a prayer called the *Shema* which affirms God's singularity) on the door jamb as well.

If I did have any worries of appropriating culture, they were dispelled when one afternoon my neighbors and I were coming home at the same time. As we both happened to open our doors simultaneously, we peeked into each other's homes. Their *genkan* had their shoes and slippers neatly placed in the cupboard, and on top of the alcove instead of the Emperor and Empress dolls were stuffed Mickey and Minnie Mouse dolls. They saw my traditional dolls and we laughed and pointed to one another and they said to me, *Nihongo* (Japanese)? And I said to them *America-jin* (American)?

We Americans have always had to wrestle with questions of what can we bring from our homeland, whether we are immigrants or refugees coming from or fleeing the old country. There is only so much room to bring items and most of it must be practical. Thus, with the exception of a few pots and pans or maybe a nice set of candlesticks or a fine porcelain teacup, most of what we pass on is ephemeral, stories and recipes. The state of flux—this retreat and return—is the folklorist's realm. It is this liminal state where we live, constantly coaxing the stories from our elders about what life was like and how we make peace with the present.

As a child, I heard and listened intently to my Bubba, my paternal grandmother, as she told stories. Most often it was at her kitchen table after a lunch for my siblings and me and our cousins. When I was growing up, public schools closed on Wednesdays at noon so teachers could attend workshops, so every Wednesday, we went to Bubba's at lunchtime. It was great fun to be with her, she had lots of nooks and crannies in her house for us to explore. I loved hanging back with her at the kitchen table and listening to her talk about my father and his siblings growing up as kids. She taught me to cook and bake and appreciate the family stories.

My maternal grandmother, Bubbie, also a great baker, passed on a love of baking and cooking; best of all, she passed down some treasures to my mother, and then they were passed to me. Among them were goose feather filled pillows that came with her to America in 1918, two of which I carried with me to Japan in 1994. The pillows made a great nest for some of my more delicate houseware items I was bringing with me. More importantly, they provided comfort, knowing that Bubbie had once been a stranger in a strange land, having immigrated to the United States from Lithuania. My home in Japan was filled with items like my pillows and quilts and an ever-growing collection of Japanese ceramics, pottery and textiles. I wrote letters home to friends and family describing my fieldwork as I explored and settled

into my new life. Giving life to my everyday objects really helped anchor me while I lived abroad.

I joked that "hunting" pottery was my therapy when I was living there. When the stress of being a stranger in a new land got to be too much, I would bike to my favorite shops and look at the ceramics and wares. Somehow the beauty of these objects would remind me of the good things in my new homeland and many times I would buy something just to hold onto that feeling.

As folklorists we take these ordinary objects and life experiences and stories and make them "less ordinary" by listening to people and helping them give life to the things that are important to them. After many years of interviewing and listening, I spent the Covid-19 year of quarantine by making short videos of my most prized objects. From teacups and plates from my mother's china closet that are now mine, to the varied teapots and vessels and plates from my time in Japan, I lovingly told the story of each item. Having these beautiful objects with me this year in quarantine and remembering where I bought them or who gave them to me, or just seeing my mother and grandmother's heirlooms gave me great comfort and strength to start each day. I do not always drink tea out of my china teacups, but I do use them. Like Dee's mother and sister, I try to use the inherited objects throughout the year, enough times to tie me to the past.

As a folklorist, I have spent my life collecting objects. I can't help myself. I love stuff and I love learning about the role each piece of pottery, glassware, or Bubbie's pillows play in the places I am. Actually, I am not sure if my interest/ obsession/collecting is due to my training as a folklorist, or my grandfather's occupation first as a junk dealer and then as owner of Griff Furniture in Waltham, Massachusetts. Selling things or retail, as we Jews describe it, was the occupation of many immigrants and first-generation families. Griff Furniture never franchised. We were a local business and spending time with customers and the neighborhood folks was how my family thought business ought to be conducted. The store was not just where customers came to buy sofas and dining room tables, it was for good conversation and a good deal. I would say my siblings and I all became good listeners, and we all have our share of stories about the characters who came into the store. But I was the only one who was bold enough to turn the family art of listening to people describe the everyday uses of ordinary things into a career. Celebrating and giving life to these objects of everyday use is how I have lived a folklorist's life, and, to quote Robert Frost, another New Englander, "That has made all the difference."

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Dell Hymes, "Folklore's Nature and the Sun's Myth"

Stefan Groth

At the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Portland, Oregon, outgoing AFS president Dell H. Hymes (1927–2009) delivered his presidential address titled "Folklore's Nature and the Sun's Myth." Published one year later in the *Journal of American Folklore,* flagship journal of US folklore studies, the address has since become an oft-cited piece both for its reflections on disciplinary history and futures, and for its conceptual contribution to debates on context, performance, and traditionalization. Hymes, his training and career as a folklorist "intertwined with anthropology and linguistics" (Hymes 1975: 345) much like the discipline itself, sets out to discuss the "state of the art" of folklore studies. He does so not by way of disciplinary introspection but by relating his perspectives of folklore studies' main potentials to anthropology and linguistics. This endeavor of bringing into dialogue three disciplines with common origins yet divergent trajectories is a guiding thread in Hymes' scholarly and professional work as he, after his presidency of the American Folklore Society (1973–74), also presided over the Linguistic Society of America (1982), the American Anthropological Association (1983), and the American Association of Applied Linguistics (1986–87). The relation between language and culture, and respectively between ethnography and linguistics, is a consistent focus in his writings, including his central contributions to the so-called performative turn in the humanities and social sciences in the 1970s.

Hymes is credited with having had considerable influence in shaping linguistic anthropology as a distinct sub-discipline of US anthropology, with establishing the

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ethnography of speaking as a model for the analysis of speech events in context, and with developing ethnopoetics as a view of "languages not in the sense of stable, closed and internally homogeneous units characterizing parts of mankind …, but as ordered complexes of genres, styles, registers and forms of use" (Blommaert 2006: 259). These efforts are bridging disciplinary boundaries with ease and still today, Hymes' œuvre is a fixed reference in sociolinguistics, (linguistic) anthropology, and folklore studies. Few of his writings have been translated into German, a collection of essays edited by Florian Coulmas and translated by Fritz Schütze and Florian Coulmas (Hymes 1979) being a notable exception that has been well received mostly in interactional sociolinguistics. Somewhat surprisingly and despite shared perspectives, his works have only been scarcely cited in German-speaking *Volkskunde* and European Ethnology. Regina Bendix has to be credited for introducing Hymes to a larger disciplinary audience in writing (e.g., Bendix 2003; 2004) and teaching, including a course on the ethnography of communication in Göttingen in 2005 which I had the pleasure of attending as a graduate student.

Hymes' essay starts with an attempt to describe what constitutes folklore studies as a discipline and folklorists as a group of scholars. Best read as a portrayal of and reverence to his contemporary colleagues, Hymes posits that professional identities and personal self-conceptions of folklore scholars are not haphazardly related but reflective of a deep dedication to the matter of study. In his view, "the folklorist commonly embodies a personal synthesis of social and aesthetic values" (Hymes 1975: 346); as distinctive features of his fellow scholars he lists the "concern with the aesthetic and expressive aspects of culture; concern with traditions and traditional life of one's own society; enjoyment of, and caring for, what one studies; often, craftsman-like participation in the tradition studied; concern for accuracy and objectivity, insight and explanation, that manages by and large not to contort what one studies with procrustean methodology, or to conceal it behind a mask of theoretics" (345). From this survey of concerns emanates a stance that still today resonates with representatives of the discipline, and which has its origins in scholarly debates of the time. Against the positivist strands of linguistics which sought to isolate universal structures, Hymes stresses performance and creativity; against a theorizing and distancing view of the groups one studies, Hymes stresses involvement and participation while being wary of conflating reflection with affection. This, crucially, includes aesthetic experience beyond 'Culture with a capital C' and the "recognition that beauty, form, and meaningful expression may arise wherever people have a chance, even half a chance, to share what they enjoy or must endure" (346). As an example from his studies in Oregon, Hymes recollects "the satisfaction in the voice of Mrs. Blanche Tohet of Warm Springs, Oregon, when, having finished fixing eels to dry one evening, she stood back, looking at them strung on a long line, and said, 'There, in't [*sic*] that beautiful?'" (ibid.). One might find in this assertion the transfer of Kenneth Pike's emic/etic distinction to aesthetic experience, similarly situated between linguistics and anthropology and

related to Alan Dundes's earlier efforts to establish the category of emic units in folktales.

This is the pivotal point in Hymes' presidential address that establishes "community definitions" (350) as a guiding concept for disciplinary approaches and their potential over other disciplines. It is discussed in more detail after the appreciative general introduction as Hymes moves to discuss disciplinary politics and the place of folklore studies among other disciplines—a debate all too familiar for German European Ethnologists. He argues that a lacking general understanding of the discipline's scope leaves folklore studies being "perceived as the study of things neglected by others, the leavings of other sciences" (346). To change this perception and the role of folklore studies in relation to other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, Hymes argues that "folklore must advance a general conception of itself" (347), including "theory and methodology proper to [the fundamental] aspect of reality" it attends to. Drawing on the disciplinary development of linguistics in the US in the twentieth century and its relation to anthropology and folklore studies, Hymes advances such a conception. He argues that regarding communication in a wide sense as "human symbolic competence" (349), folklore studies are in a unique position to bridge the gap between the study of language decoupled from its everyday performance and anthropological approaches in which linguistic aspects are marginalized (and which shy away from studying one's own society). "Folklore's concern with the aesthetic and expressive, with craftsman-like participation, with accurate maintenance of form" (350) is, according to Hymes, the ideal basis to ethnographically relate language to values and identity and, subsequently, to pinpoint the distinctness of folklore studies as a discipline.

Five key notions of folklore studies are constitutive for his understanding: *genre* as salient forms of everyday interaction not limited to myth, tale, or proverb but stretching to "any recurring activity" with "structured expectation" (351); *performance* as a specific quality of interaction and "potentiality of conduct", i.e., not simply as interaction but as "a quality that opens up the heart of the satisfactions one finds in folklore research" (353); *tradition* as a process of grounding activities in social life (rather than time), including the efforts of a group to "'traditionalize' aspects of its experience" (ibid.); *situation* as a counterpart to tradition and a "name for the other forces in social life" (355); and lastly *creativity* as communal and individual re-creation and interpretation. These five notions, Hymes argues, are bound to community (or emic) definitions: what constitutes a genre, whether a genre is 'truly' performed (352) or 'just enacted,' which aspects of social life are traditionalized and which are counted as situational, and how genre and performance, and respectively tradition and situation, are "pervaded by forms of creativity" (356)—these questions require the ethnographic endeavors of folklore studies to be answered.

Hymes' address culminates with an example of his ethnopoetic approach, a transcription of a Chinook myth (360–367). "The Sun's Myth," recorded by Franz Boas in 1891, was narrated by Charles Cultee in Kathlamet, the language Hymes

extensively dealt with in his PhD dissertation *The Language of Kathlamet Chinook* (Indiana University, 1955) based on publications and recordings by Boas. Hymes uses this example both to illustrate his previous discussion of folklore studies' key notions and, more importantly, to put in context the myth as an instance of the texts the discipline deals with and their grounding in social life. The myth of the Sun is about the "mutuality between the people and the powers of the world around them" (358), about a particular relation to nature, and about decay caused by hybris and not abiding to social norms. In presenting the myth to his audience in Portland, Hymes pays deference to the Kathlamet Chinook who lived in his home state Oregon before their "destruction … in the middle of the nineteenth century, from 1830 on, particularly by disease" (ibid.). The "synthesis of social and aesthetic values" (346) which Hymes alludes to as qualities of his fellow folklorists is best reflected in this presentation.

For me, the paper served as one of a few first readings on US folklore studies and its history, alongside works by Dundes, Bauman, Briggs, Noyes, and—for the German speaking context inevitably—Bendix and her concise introduction to the discipline (Bendix 1995). Hymes' paper, while well received after its publication, is an unconventional reading for an introduction to folklore studies in terms of genre and situation—a presidential address at an annual conference. From my limited experience with such works, they tend to age less well than "Folklore's Nature," either because they are too specifically bound to locale, time, and conference theme, or because they engage in disciplinary (and, more broadly, scholarly) politics for its own sake. Hymes does both: he situates his arguments at a vantage point of folklore studies and advances his conceptions of the discipline based on his transdisciplinary standing and strong leaning towards the performative turn (without going much into detail of respective debates). Yet, the enduring appeal of his performance might be explained by what Hymes terms *participants* in his SPEAKING model, i.e., the speaker and the multiple present and future audiences, directly or implicitly addressed. In the years after its publication, the paper's open and inclusive conception enabled it to be taken up not only by fierce proponents of Hymes' proposition but also more generally by those interested in advancing the discipline in relation to but distinct from related fields of study. And further, its attempt to outline the characteristics of a discipline entailed in synthesizing fashion many axiomatic propositions to later debates. From my subjective perspective, the integrative role of language in Hymes' view of folklore studies had much appeal vis-à-vis developments in German *Volkskunde* in which it remains at the sidelines of the discipline. Likewise, Hymes' brief discussion of traditionalization brings together crucial pillars of subsequent discussions on cultural heritage and property. And the list of ways in which the paper offers connections to other substantial topics can be continued: it includes a prime example of the ethnopoetic approach, ties performance to the potentiality of conduct, makes the case for disciplinary politics as well as for transdisciplinary collaboration. Re-reading the paper in 2021, it enables its potential audiences to peek into a breadth of different debates in 1974

while foreshadowing many subsequent developments and illustrating their contingencies.

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Áslaug Einarsdóttir, *What is European Ethnology?*

Christine Hämmerling

Zumal ich jemand bin, der sich privat wie fachlich für Werbung begeistert und sich ferner mit Authentizität in Professionalisierungsprozessen beschäftigt, liegt es nahe, dass der Text, den ich hier diskutieren möchte, ein Werbefilm ist. Doch geht es mir um diesen Text in einem spezifischen Kontext: Wir erleben eine Zeit, in der äußerst viele Institute unseres Vielnamenfaches eigene Image-Filme produzieren, in meinem Studium war ich sogar selbst einmal an der Produktion eines solchen, allerdings recht laienhaften Clips beteiligt. Die Filme, die heute auf die Homepages gestellt werden, kommen dagegen sehr professionell daher – sei es, weil man auf die Könnerschaft derer Kolleg:innen bauen konnte, die visuelle Anthropologie auch praktisch betreiben und zur Produktion von Filmen ausgebildet sind, oder weil diese Expertise eingekauft wurde. Ich erachte werbende Image-Filme dennoch als ganz spezifische Wissensformate, die ich angesichts einer derzeitigen Flut dieser Produktionen gerne vertieft betrachten möchte.

Ausgangspunkt für diese Sichtung stellt der 3.50 Minuten kurze Film *What is European Ethnology* der SIEF-Filmkünstlerin Áslaug Einarsdóttir von 2014 dar. Der Film führt stimmungsvoll und ruhig in eine Thematik ein, die visuell und akustisch erst nach und nach wie ein Mosaik bestimmt wird. Wie aus der Ferne setzt Musik ein, erst ist nur eine Glocke zu hören, dann kommen mehr hinzu, bis die Klänge ein Ganzes bilden. Analog dazu taucht in rascher, aber ruhiger Schnittfolge eine Vielzahl von Bildausschnitten im Split-Screen auf: eine U-Bahn fährt ein, eine Hochzeit wird fotografiert, in der Ferne werden Container verladen. In einer Cafeteria sieht sich eine Frau um, eine Stadtansicht. Schließlich verbinden sich zwei dieser Bilder miteinander, Titel und Thema des Clips *What is European Ethnology?*

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werden eingeblendet und verbinden die darüber und darunter liegenden Szenen zu einem Gesamtwerk. Klänge von einem Hang und untermalende Percussions ersetzen dieses Intro und leiten in den Hauptteil über, der auf der Bildebene jedoch erst etwas verspätet erscheint: Auf die Ansicht einer belebten Fußgängerzone folgt die Kamera im Close-Up dem Gesicht des Sprechenden, der mit seinem Erzähleinstieg die Frage im Titel des Films ebenso aufnimmt wie die vielen visuellen Eindrücke des Intros. „Ethnology is really a strange subject, because it is a little bit of everything, which I think is a great thing about it", fasst Orvar Löfgren die visuellen Eindrücke zusammen und verbindet dabei eine Information über das Vielnamenfach Europäische Ethnologie mit einer persönlichen Bewertung.

Wenn wir heute Wissenschaft betreiben, dann geht es dabei immer auch um Wissensvermittlung, ein Kommunizieren über den Kreis der Studierenden und der Scientific Community hinaus. Wissenschaftskommunikation soll Citizen Science ermöglichen und Publika außerhalb des eigenen Umfeldes erreichen. An der Universität generiertes Wissen wird daher oft schon ‚on the go', also während seiner Erhebung, zugänglich gemacht und Arbeit in Projekte gegliedert, die bisweilen auch noch journalistisch begleitet werden. Ein wichtiger Bereich der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit für unser Fach, das in den meisten Ländern nicht als Schulfach etabliert ist, ist die Studiengangskommunikation. Hier gilt es nicht in erster Linie, Studien, Projekte und Ergebnisse zu verbreiten, sondern es wird aufgezeigt, was spezifisch für das Fachverständnis ist: Forschungsfelder, Fragen und Methoden müssen so vermittelt werden, dass potenzielle Projektpartner*innen sich davon ebenso angesprochen fühlen wie künftige Studierende. Diesen pluralen Anforderungen entsprechend werden unterschiedliche Wissensformate produziert und platziert: Studieninformationstage mit eigenen Info-Clips, Eindrücken und Image-Filmen werden konzipiert, Webseiten überarbeitet, News-Letter und Social-Media-Kanäle installiert.

Bei so vielen unterschiedlichen Ansprüchen an die Produkte der Wissensvermittlung kann es schonmal zu „Formatsfrustrationen" (Bendix 2008) kommen. Nicht nur entsprechen die teils schon vorgegebenen Schablonen für die Selbstdarstellung nicht immer dem ‚Stil' des Faches, sondern das Wissen um die Rezeptionsbreite, die vielen unterschiedlichen Kontexte, in die beispielsweise ein Werbefilm Eingang finden kann, erschweren das emotionale Management, das es bei Werbefilmen zu beachten gilt. Und ein Wissensformat, das als Werbung erkennbar ist, bleibt nicht ohne Wirkung auf den darin vermittelten Inhalt (White 1987). Mit einem Werbeformat werden die Angesprochenen unweigerlich zu Kund*innen, wir zu Anbieter*innen, das Studium wird vermarktet und wir positionieren uns auf diesem Markt.

Dieser Umstand stellt noch eine weitere Herausforderung dar. Denn beispielsweise ein Werbeclip ist ein Wissensformat, für das die meisten von uns nicht geschult sind. Wir sind zwar als Wissenschaftler*innen und ein paar von uns sogar als Dokumentarfilmende professionell, nicht aber darin, für uns zu werben – doch

das ändert sich derzeit. Die Selbstdarstellung von Forschungsergebnissen, Forschenden und ganzen Forschungseinrichtungen wird umstrukturiert: Sekretariate sind nun vermehrt auch für Social Media zuständig, die IT versorgt die Homepages, Fachevaluationen betrachten die Web- und Social-Media-Auftritte der Institute in Evaluationen.

Die Selbstvermarktung des Faches, seiner Zugänge und Standorte stellt also einen jener Sektoren dar, die derzeit weiter ausdifferenziert und professionalisiert werden. Professionalisierung betrifft sowohl Praktiken, Wissensaneignung und das Einüben von Handlungen als auch das Einbinden von externem Wissen und das Anpassen an neue Standards in allen Ebenen der Performanz. Professionalisierungsprozesse dieser Art, die also gewöhnlich auch mit einer Ökonomisierung einhergehen, werden von Diskursen begleitet, die neue Werte stark machen und alte Werte weiterverhandeln: Fragen danach, ob mit einer strukturellen und medialen Veränderung auch Inhalte, Menschen und Abläufe verändert werden, und ob sie über die Veränderung hinweg erkennbar bleiben, sind zugleich Fragen nach Authentizität. Beim Werben wird eine Wesenhaftigkeit unseres Faches (und bezüglich der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Ethnologie und Folklore [SIEF] auch der Ethnologie) angenommen, die es zu erhalten und bewahren gilt. Dieser ‚Kern' des Faches, diese Erwartung an seine Spezifika wie an seine Offenheit und Breite, darf auch beim Werben nicht verloren gehen, vielmehr muss der Eindruck einer Übereinstimmung von Erwartung und Erlebtem generiert werden (Schilling 2020: 41). Ferner wird ein Eindruck von Authentizität über individuelle Biografien und Narrative hergestellt. Ich möchte damit zum vorgestellten Film zurückkommen:

Orvar Löfgren ist Professor emeritus für Europäische Ethnologie; sein Eingangs-Statement in *What is European Ethnology?* besteht aus zwei Teilen: einer Information und einer persönlichen Bewertung. Es wäre ja möglich gewesen, nur die Information in den Film zu integrieren, doch Werbung geht einen anderen Weg: Gefühltes und Individuelles brauchen in ihr eine Plattform. So kommt es, dass auch die Statements der nun folgenden Kolleg*innen, (Regina Bendix, Tine Damsholt, Peter Jan Margry, Sophie Elpers, Jasna Čapo, Valdimar Hafstein und Hester Dibbits) Informationen mit persönlichen Eindrücken und Bewertungen verbinden. Während die Klänge des Hang das visuelle Driften von einer Alltagsszene in eine andere begleiten, hören wir die Erzählungen der Wissenschaftler*innen. Obwohl sie alle darüber berichten, was Europäische Ethnologie bedeutet, wie Ethnolog*innen Fragen stellen, wie sie forschen, wie sie Alltag beschreiben und analysieren, wird zugleich deutlich, dass hier Persönliches, sogar Biografisches, Geschmäcker und Interessen zugänglich gemacht werden. Denn immer scheint die Hintergrundfrage gewesen zu sein, was die Erzähler*innen an diesem Fach fasziniert („this is what really fascinates me"; „one thing I find fun about ethnology"), was sie daran lieben („I love to hear people talk"), was sie daran als bedeutend empfinden („everyday life needs to be unpacked"), woran sie glauben („We believe, there are things to be learned, and that we don't know them already.")

also was sie dazu antreibt, Europäische Ethnolog*innen zu sein – und was andere dazu antreiben könnte, sich ebenfalls mit Europäischer Ethnologie zu beschäftigen.

Diese persönlichen Zugänge sind es, die den werbenden, Anschluss suchenden Charakter des Filmes ausmachen. Sie vermitteln neben Informationen über das Fach (an denen der Clip reich ist) eine auf Individuen heruntergebrochene Authentizität – es sind Narrative, die ein „doing emotion" (Scheer 2012) zeigen, weil es immer darum geht, was die Erzählenden dazu antreibt, Europäische Ethnolog*innen zu sein. Dies ist ein Zugang, der an die groß angelegte Werbekampagne der Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken durch die Berliner Agentur „Heimat" unter dem Slogan „Was uns antreibt" von 2009/2010 erinnert (Hämmerling 2012: 114–116). In der Pressemitteilung hieß es damals: „Die Volksbanken und Raiffeisenbanken entschieden sich bewusst gegen eine allzu gekünstelte Kampagne und für Authentizität." (Pressemitteilung). Auch hier gelang das Vermitteln von Authentizität über Selbstnarrative. Und zwar wurden die Erzählenden beim reflektierenden Erklären und nicht mit einem vorgefertigten Statement festgehalten. Anders als bei Werbeclips, in denen ‚Leute auf der Straße' angesprochen werden, um deren Ansicht zur beworbenen Firma einzuholen (Brille: Fielmann), merkt man, dass die hier Erzählenden selbst sprechen wollen. Sie müssen nicht erst dazu aufgefordert werden, denn was sie sagen, ist ihr persönliches Anliegen. Ermöglicht wurde dieser Eindruck von Echtheit und Dringlichkeit, indem im Vorfeld Regisseure einen Dokumentarfilm entwickelten, für den sie Menschen zum Erzählen aufforderten, ohne schon einen Werbefilm im Sinn zu haben. ‚Reden lassen', schien ihr Motto gewesen zu sein. Erst im Nachhinein wurden kurze Ausschnitte aus dieser Dokumentation zu einem Werbefilm zusammengesetzt.

Dem SIEF-Clip *What is European Ethnology?* liegt keine Dokumentation zugrunde, doch stilistisch ist auch dies ein Werbefilm, der sich an das unserem Fach ohnehin nahestehende Format des Dokumentarfilms anlehnt. Schon die Wahl der Filmkünstlerin, die für die SIEF auch weitere Kurzfilme produziert (Ethnological Sensations, Ethnological Matterings) deutet darauf hin, dass es zum Konzept der Eigenwerbung der SIEF gehörte, schon das Format Werbefilm so zu spezifizieren, dass es zu den Selbstbildern des Faches passt. So konnten – wie ich finde sehr erfolgreich – allerhand Formatsfrustrationen umgangen werden.

Das „Wir", das sich in den Erzählungen über unser Fach in diesem Clip abbildet, ist gefüllt mit Neugierde, mit großem Interesse an kleinen Dingen, an Blicken, Details und Bewegungen, am Nahen wie am Fernen. Es ist weit gefasst und offen, und doch vermittelt es Verbundenheit und Zugänglichkeit. Mich hat diese Stimmungslage, die der Film vermittelt, besonders beeindruckt, zumal der Werbeclip es zugleich nicht versäumt, informativ zu sein. So hat es mich auch nicht gewundert, dass wir uns am Züricher Institut absprechen mussten, in welcher Lehrveranstaltung für Studienanfänger der Film denn gezeigt werden darf, damit ihn nicht alle gleichzeitig nutzen.

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Þórarinn Eldjárn, *Ofsögum sagt* (*Exaggerations*)

Valdimar Tr. Hafstein

I must have been seventeen when I read it, eighteen at most. I was a gluttonous reader in those years. I went through stacks of novels and plays and poetry, ripping my way through the Greek tragedies over a sleepless weekend, the collected plays of Shakespeare in a week. I borrowed the collected works of Beckett, Lorca, Leonard Cohen, and I plowed through the books with all the intransigence of pimpled adolescence. I can't say I recall much of it. Their spines in the library stacks. The book covers. The sex scenes. Sometimes the gist.

At some point during those years of book grinding, the collection of short stories stopped over on my nightstand. The title, *Ofsögum sagt*, is a clever twist on a proverbial saying in Icelandic: "Það er ekki ofsögum sagt að …", "It is no exaggeration to say that …;" perhaps best rendered as *Exaggerations*, though of course the wordplay is lost in translation. One of my closest friends passed it to me, Kristján Eldjárn, the first prose work by his father published in 1981 when we were nine. With ten short stories, *Ofsögum sagt* was also the first of Þórarinn Eldjárn's (b. 1949) books that I devoured. Prolific poet and novelist, his most favored form is the short story. I can't do justice to just how funny they are; how evocative, irreverent, tender, tragic, well-crafted, and devastatingly hilarious. This much I do recall from my brush with *Ofsögum sagt*, an impression reinforced by reading his other books at other times. But the individual stories I'd honestly forgotten all about, every one of them.

It's been ages since my avarice dwindled to mere and occasional late-night cravings, usually satisfied with a quick thriller, sometimes a more substantial novel around the holidays (usually the same one). However, suffering the rituals of social

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distancing during the pandemic, I found relief in audio books. Books, I discovered, provided congenial company on a walk in the park, a drive to the suburbs, a workout (on the elliptical I bought in the classifieds), or a masked and latex-gloved promenade through the supermarket.

It was on my way from the car to the grocery store one miserably gray afternoon in February that I took Storytel's suggestion ("You might like:") to listen to *Ofsögum sagt* (read by a talented actor, Stefán Benedikt Vilhelmsson). Already in the vegetable aisle, I gave a chortle. In the dairy section, I tried to suppress a laugh. By the time I reached the self-check-out counters, tears were streaming down my face. The wit was scintillating, the stories brilliant. Having loaded the trunk, I drove around aimlessly. After unpacking the groceries at home, I retired to my elliptical in the cellar to finish the book: delivered in three hours and sixteen minutes. Listening to the stories thirty years after reading them, I remembered not one of the plot resolutions. None of the punchlines hit me before the reader artfully delivered them.

Nevertheless, there was something oddly familiar about the stories. It took me a while to figure out because, I think, the familiarity involved not any particular story, but rather all the stories taken together. Their accumulated impression or underlying conception, the thread tying the one to the other, I realized, was uncannily like my intellectual biography. Their order within the book doesn't precisely mirror the chronology of my research career, but then again, that chronology is not particularly orderly or logical; in hindsight, I seem to have jumped back and forth between the pages of *Ofsögum sagt*.

From fieldwork in folk belief and legends—the boy attempting to record on his tape-recorder the conversation of the cows in the barn on New Year's Eve, that liminal time when the elves come to party and the cattle speak—to a study of the tyranny of things (around which I've organized a course in material culture) in the story of a broken hairdryer, or the study of humor and its artifices (around which I built a good part of my course on contemporary folklore) in the story of the man who painstakingly develops the perfect laughter only to find he has lost his sense of humor; from folklife under occupation (which I took part in building a museum around) to children's relations with military forces (which I studied through the medium of chocolate, but Þórarinn through bubble gum); from the account of the disappearance of certain crafts (handbag repairs, in a story translated as "Die Taschenkrise") and the catastrophic social effects of such loss of intangible heritage (a conception to which I've dedicated a book and a bunch of articles) to the moral effects of swimming (about which I'm working on an exhibition in Iceland's Museum of Design and Applied Art): it dawned on me while stashing away the groceries that all the topics I've studied, the paradoxes I've attempted to unravel and questions I've tried to answer have also been a focus in the writings of Þórarinn Eldjárn. All are present in *Ofsögum sagt*, published when I was nine.

Þórarinn returns to many of these in his later books. Just last night I read in his 1988 novel *Skuggabox* a devastating parody of an ethnographic study of symbolic interaction in gang showers in public pools; the showers take center stage in the

exhibition on swimming pool culture opening next month. Indeed, the representation of traditional culture in museums is the topic of a zany story in his latest book, released last month, with the title "Toffi og Þjolli," in which the eponymous senior citizens take up part-time jobs portraying disappearing folk customs (such as smoking) at the Folkways Museum (Eldjárn 2021).

The best-known story in *Ofsögum sagt*—and one of Þórarinn's most beloved stories—is "Síðasta rannsóknaræfingin" (The Last Conference). It narrates with grim humor the tragic success of the last conference of the Association for Icelandic Studies in bringing together with perfect attendance every scholar in Iceland in the fields of language, literature, and folklore for an annual event with a keynote lecture, an animated debate, and a ritual meal of fermented shark and other traditional fare washed down with generous servings of brennivín schnapps. We follow the excited preparations of our protagonist, for whom this is the social highlight of the year, as he joins his colleagues in this intellectual festival of indulgence; we observe the adulation of the luminaries in the field; and witness the pettiness of their arguments, all amplified by the booze, and finally curtailed by general vomiting—lethal poisoning from the fermented shark puts a revolting end to the party and very nearly to the discipline. Our protagonist is the last man standing, the last and only surviving hope for Icelandic studies. He had promised his wife to steer clear of the foul-smelling shark; it was the day of her ovulation.

As a dedicated folklorist (and student of foodways), I have never been able to make such promises. However, I can relate to this story as an academic conference organizer (the only thing most scholars at any given conference agree on is how terrible the food is). Moreover, the fermented shark I cannot help but associate with the research project that I currently lead on fermentation as a form of human-microbial relations. The project focuses on fermented foods; we follow fermentation from kitchen crafts through the gut microbiome to the fermentation of organic waste in various forms of composting. Scheduled to run for the next few years, the project has biologists and nutrition scientists working together with ethnologists, anthropologists, and archeologists. We take as our frame of reference a renewed understanding of the body as a multitude, composed of countless organisms of multiple species, with the human cells in minority; an ecological understanding of humans as part of their environment, with a focus on the kitchen counter as one locus of symbiotic living between species.

Which brings me around to one more story from *Ofsögum sagt*. This is the story that brought it home for me. Listening to this one, I realized it is not just that Þórarinn Eldjárn and I share an interest in the topics of folklore and ethnology, which as such is not so surprising: Þórarinn literally grew up in the National Museum, where his father was director and the family lived on the ground floor (he actually had skeletons in his closet); and he went on to pursue Icelandic studies and literature at the universities of Iceland and Lund. There is more at play here than common interests; a bizarre replication. As Sigmund Freud taught us, the "Unheimliche" is not so much the opposite as the extension of the "Heimliche",

the homely and familiar. The uncanny, he wrote, "is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind, and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression" (1999: 241). The way in which familiar details of my intellectual trajectory since entering university in 1992 are hilariously prefigured in Þórarinn's 1981 collection of short stories points to a well-worn and thoroughly examined literary device, as common in medieval sagas as in modern literature, in which dreams and visions prefigure later events. The uncanniness of prefiguration, in this case, leads me to deduce that I am a character in Þórarinn's fiction. It is the only way I can get the coincidence of facts and circumstances to make sense, considering the chronology. As Freud went on to say, "the uncanny [i]s something which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light" (ibid.).

The story to which I'm referring, the one that brought me to this realization, is "Lífheimur borðtuskunnar;" the title translates as "The Biome of the Kitchen Rag." It tells the story of an eccentric fellow, Dr. Óskar Björnsson, a biologist who sustained a serious head injury at his doctoral defense when a letter from a line of poetry inscribed above the door to the aula came loose and fell on his head. The University of Iceland felt obliged to bestow the degree, although technically the doctoral candidate had been unconscious during the ceremony, but the accident did not mark the end of his scientific career. He turned with all the scientific rigor of his basement laboratory to a socio-biological study of the microbiome of kitchen rags. The story is told from the vantage point of a narrator who, as a boy, lived across the street from Óskar and took part in his experiments. He was charged with collecting specimens for the study from housewives in various parts of the city. They analyze the microbiome of the rag in four stages: first, a microscopic analysis of fungi, bacteria, and other microbes; next, using the "scent-spectrum" as a means of classification, they detect mildew, mold, decay, sickly sweet, oily, chemical, and sui generis smells; then they analyze the fabric and origin (was it designed to be a rag or had it earlier served as underwear, pyjama, shirt?); and finally, the social analysis involves detecting differences according to the social class of the owners (is it a laborer's rag or an executive's rag?), their age, and neighborhood. An interdisciplinary study, in other words, of microbiota and their social relations, centering on the kitchen counter.

I have deliberately left for last a topic of research that has kept me coming back for more over the past twenty years: that of originals and copies, authorship, tradition, and copyright. I have argued elsewhere that historically tradition emerged as a remainder of authorship, its constitutive outside (Hafstein 2014). The discursive and legal regimes that attributed to the author the power to create—a verb that until the late eighteenth century was reserved for the divine acts of a God—left the folk with the ability only to echo, to repeat or perform its stories, songs, and rituals, an ability (and limitation) to which countless collections and ethnographies bear witness. Realizing now how *Ofsögum sagt* prefigured my trajectory in a series of *Exaggerations*, how I appear to have echoed, repeated, and performed its pages over

the course of my career to date, I wonder once again about the precepts of creative agency. Our laws and ideologies conspire to embody creative agency in individual subjects: the sole producers of texts with the legal ability to assign copyright to publishers and impeachable for their offenses and crimes of writing. But as Michel Foucault maintains in "What is an Author?" (1997), it is a fallacy to believe that authors create their works; in fact, it is the other way around: the works create the author. Regardless of historical biographies, Shakespeare as an author is a product of the plays we attribute to him, much like Homer is a product of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, James Joyce a product of *Ulysses* and *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Which brings me to my final realization: if Þórarinn Eldjárn too is a product of his works, it is I who have created him.

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Paul Goodman, *The Structure of Literature*

Lee Haring

Until *Growing Up Absurd* became a best-seller in 1960, Paul Goodman (1911–1972) was a poet, novelist, and dramatist hardly known beyond a few New York intellectuals—Susan Sontag's crowd. Against the well-known title of a 1955 film, the book argued that so-called "juvenile delinquents" had a good cause for rebelling against the oppressions of American society. To a reader like me—chronically out of step, Quaker, pacifist, democratic socialist teaching in a college English department—that criticism had strong appeal, because the author combined anarchistic politics with reverence for the high culture I was trained in. I became Goodman's disciple, at a distance. It was a surprise to discover Goodman had written a doctoral dissertation in literary criticism at the University of Chicago. Its references to Aristotle nod to the Chicago professors, but otherwise *The Structure of Literature* (1954) disregards the critical establishment. I didn't quite know what to make of it.

Goodman asserts that reading (or seeing the play) is contact, and that contact makes the observer and the observed into a unity. That momentary experience fuses those two elements, which analysis keeps separate, into a single phenomenon. Hence as critic, he can startle the reader with a statement like "passion *is* the breakdown of character in the complex sequence of the plot" (Goodman 15; emphasis added). My conventional training gave me no preparation for this paradox. Can you really say, watching *Oedipus*, that what Aristotle names as an audience's fear is the same thing as "the [playwright's] destruction of the apparent plot and its agent"? What does it mean to equate Aristotle's concept of pity with "the succession of the hidden to the apparent plot" (41)? I managed to apply a few

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of Goodman's statements in teaching, but they didn't fully connect with my experience as a reader. Then I began studying folklore and adopted "verbal art" as my master term. It became possible to italicize Goodman's words and apply them to written and unwritten genres: "[I]n poems [or folktales or proverbs] … we are dealing with *a single system*; not internal thought and overt speech, but the motion of meanings, given in the syntax, etc. *This* is what constitutes literature" (241; emphasis added). Motion of meanings constitutes folklore too.

Rereading the book now, I see Goodman's paradoxes as resulting from a mode of criticism, rooted in psychology, that is applicable in both literature and folklore. He will coach readers to become more aware of their own experience as they read. He calls his method "inductive formal analysis": inductive because it derives its generalizations from individual works, formal because it naively asks each word, character, or action to reveal both its relation to the others and its function in forming a Gestalt. He asks of each play, novel, or poem, "How do the parts imply one another to make this whole?" (3). A part is "anything in the aesthetic surface that combines" (274); identifying each part, he focuses on one work after another, uncovering its formal structure. Hence reading *The Structure of Literature* is not like sitting in class. It's more like being taken around a great museum, say the Kunstmuseum in Basel, by someone who really knows and loves the paintings and is eager to talk to you about what he has discovered in them. His psychology defines your contact with the work as a "creative adjustment of the organism and environment" (Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman 230), in encounters where the environment is constituted by the presented surface of the work.

Goodman groups classic works in four more or less Aristotelian genres: serious, comic, and novelistic plots (including dramas), and lyrical poems. Thenceforward you and he are on your own in the library, where he will tell you what the parts are and how (or whether) they go together. Inductive formal analysis does not lead to the kind of critical generalization your professors love, like Coleridge's "Poetry: the best words in the best order," because "[i]t is the individual [poem] itself that we know" (Goodman 23), and there may be no other examples. When he places formal analysis ahead of other critical modes (no less important, only coming later), he notices "what *strange* pieces [the classics] are, and also how well made, and also, in the end, how human and modern" (24; emphasis original).

The chapter "Serious Plots," discussing Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex* and *Philoctetes* and Shakespeare's *Richard II*, is closest to Aristotle because of its detailed treatment of plotting and the involvement of characters. Inductive formal analysis leads to conclusions that echo the paradoxes above: *Oedipus* "is a compounded complex plot with a hero surviving in the resolution" (46); *Philoctetes* is a "passage from impasse to miracle" (57); and plays like *Richard II* are "overdetermined complex actions, determined by the characters and by some relatively independent cause …" (62–63). The discussion of epic plots is much broader, both inductive and generic. It illuminatingly contrasts epic with tragic plots and opens the sort of deep questions about genre theory known in folklore studies.

Then in the "Comic Plots" chapter, Goodman's insights ask to be developed and tested beyond the few hints he gives. His commentary on Jonson's *Alchemist*, for example, intentionally has far-reaching implications for all comic plots, which however are not in his exposition. His formal analysis of the complexities of *Henry IV, Part One* clearly explains how one structure can contain Hal, Falstaff, Hotspur, the king, Mistress Quickly, and great varieties of diction. Do other examples support this method, or does it require ignoring that possibility? Again, his discussion of Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe* explains successfully enough why the comedy of parody is so elusive, but stops there; wouldn't folklore offer relevant examples? If these distinct analyses of comedy were developed and woven into a coherent argument, they could well supply the lost second book of the *Poetics*.

Equally far-reaching are Goodman's discussions of other genres, like the "novelistic plots" he finds in both novels and plays. It is disconcerting that he takes a familiar word like *sentiment* and redefines it into an unfamiliar term of art, meaning (I think) a stage in the interior life of a character (Hamlet, or Kafka's K. in *The Castle*). Still, his perceptive, probing reading of Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale* convincingly supports calling the growth in Frédéric a "sentimental sequence." In the chapter on "lyrical poems," inductive formal analysis meets Aristotle's mimesis. That chapter, being on a smaller scale, might be the most convincing of all. Seeing the way the parts go together in the poems by Catullus, Milton, and Tennyson is easier to follow than for larger works. The final chapter, "Special Problems of Unity," is packed with fertile ideas. It takes up five distinct issues: differences between a translation and its source, differences between cinema and stage play, what makes a bad poem bad, how symbolism can pass over into mystery, and how formal criticism can combine with moral and genetic criticism. In each case Goodman analyzes elements that help or hinder the parts in going together to make a whole; his many suggestions under each heading hint at analyses he leaves the reader to carry through.

Goodman prepared me well to integrate literature and folklore, by demanding that in both, I look at the contact between a work of verbal art and its receiver. His psychology coached me, as both reader and critic, towards paying more attention to the contact between the reader and a text. This challenge confronts any folklorist looking at the relations between performer and audience. For example, Goodman's exposition of Aristotle's "complex plot" illuminates a pattern in African and Malagasy folktales. After what the Russian formalist Vladimir Propp called a "lack" in the plot has been "liquidated," the hero's situation does improve, to the audience's relief. Then a downward turn or deterioration complexifies the experience, but it will lead at last to a new improvement for the hero or heroine, which equals a more conclusive relief for the audience. In a more general application, my resolutely formalist, dry *Malagasy Tale Index* conceives the narrative motifs and tale types fixed by the "Finnish School" of folklore and the functions revealed by Propp to be parts of the experience of hearers of oral narrative.

Folkloristic studies of genre hint that those hearers may well have their own theory about their experience (Ben-Amos).

One topic Goodman treats is unfashionable among critics and folklorists: evaluation. Who wants to know what a bad poem, play or folktale is? Goodman does: we evaluate a drama as bad when "a structural defect in a play leads us to important considerations outside the play, in our social existence" (Goodman 258). As a folklorist trying to understand the appeal of non-Western folktales I translate, I am frequently led to considerations outside the transcribed and translated words of a story. It's not because of internal structural defects that it seems untranslatable: it's that crucial considerations remain outside the words, being the property of people in whose consciousness the story is embedded. It is foreign. How much can the privileged European reader expect to appreciate tales from a poor French colony? "In light of contingency and embeddedness, it seems untenable to claim [for these tales] transcultural, transhistorical literary value" (Coldiron 258). In Goodman's terms, the consequences of a plot have not been energized; the situation has not been shown truly; or the work is not "long enough to solve the formal problem that it poses" (Goodman 17). Is that failure because of the inability of the individual storyteller, or is that limitation an artistic convention shared in her artistic community? Or does my translating simply need informative footnotes that keep the story embedded in its sociohistorical causes? *The Structure of Literature* advocates looking for answers through formal analysis.

Finally, if coincidentally, *The Structure of Literature* pointed me towards a shift of paradigm in my adopted field. Of course Goodman's unoriginal mandate for criticism to "account for a good deal, very many of the details and the unity of the whole" (3) was ignored by literature professors of the 1950s, lecturing on the "*Schillers philosophischer Einfluss auf Goethe*" (Cohn) kind of thing, but an encompassing vision equal to Goodman's was coming into existence among American folklorists of the 1970s and 80s (notably Alan Dundes, Dell Hymes, Henry Glassie, and Roger D. Abrahams). I watched them virtually create a new field by audaciously shifting their object of study from "text" to "performance." Once they saw the words of a narrative as part of a larger phenomenon—a communication taking place among living people—they obliged themselves to conceive place, moment, and history as parts going together to make a whole. Their new critical paradigm required new categories. Now they had to define the formal, thematic, and pragmatic properties of communications, as well as their iterability, variability, and social currency. They found it impossible, as Goodman did, to ignore the dialectic between the local and the global. Goodman's demand that criticism should account for the details and the unity of the whole foreshadowed those discoveries and prefigured the future of folklore studies.

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The Power of the Shrine "Our Lady of Guadalupe"

Jeanne Harrah-Johnson

It was in one of the most unlikely of places, Las Vegas, Nevada, where I witnessed the transformational capacity of religious belief, and came to understand the concept of "community" as a verb (Cashman 2021: 94; Noyes 2003). On a cool but sunny December 12, 2001, my friend from Mexico, Augustina, and I were invited into the backyard of the Perez family in a neighborhood not far from The Strip. Cloistered in a corner behind the house, invasive desert ivy was gripping the glass frame and creating natural camouflage that protected the elaborate, five foot tall statue. Our Lady of Guadalupe was rendered in dense, shiny ceramic, an artistic expression of the apparition of the Virgin Mary, with her turquois mantel, tunic, and golden crown and aura. She brought dozens of celebrants to their knees, some weeping, as her image and miracle promised a path to healing, renewed hope, and intense personal bonds.

A bird's eye view of the scene would look like a crowded neighborhood party. People were streaming in toward the shrine. Smoke from the outdoor cooking pots was wafting up between trees carrying a mixture of pungent, acidic and sweet aromas. We caught glimpses of bright colors, feathers, shimmer, and bass to soprano sounds. There was a solemnness mixed with excitement.

Food is always a draw at such events, and here the family who owned the life-sized icon of the Virgin, had made *menudo* with tripe, *pozole*, a combination of pork, hominy and chilis, and *champurrado*, the traditional Mexican hot chocolate in enormous metal vats. Newly arriving visitors headed immediately for the feast. Perez family members ladled out generous amounts into Styrofoam bowls. The feast, however, was not the reason for the gathering.

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The Perez's backyard holds one of the largest statues of Our Lady of Guadalupe in southern Nevada. The shrine represents the apparition reputed to be seen four times in December, 1531, by Juan Diego, a Nahuatl speaking Aztec peasant (who then converted to Christianity) in the Tepeyac Hills north of Mexico City. The story is that when Juan Diego told the bishop about his sighting, the bishop requested proof. Juan Diego asked the Virgin of Guadalupe for evidence of her appearance. She told Diego to pick roses from a specific field and take them to the Bishop. The roses do not normally grow in December. As he handed them to the bishop, there appeared a full image of the Virgin of Guadalupe on Diego's cloak, which Diego offered to the bishop. A second miracle transpired at the same time. The apparition of the Virgin became visible to Juan Diego's dying uncle, who was subsequently healed. Believing that these were miraculous occurrences, testimonies of the apparition followed, and shrines to the Virgin (the apparition) became centers for pilgrimages, and common in syncretic elements of Mexican identity and culture.

Replicas of the Lady of Guadalupe are honored with celebrations in Mexico, across the US, and in other communities on December 12th. Reverence and fiestas fill the day. Many people return every year to show their gratitude and renew their faith and friendships. Nearly all hope that they might be among those few who are graced with the rare miracle of seeing firsthand the Lady of Guadalupe shrine shedding tears; thus, bearing witness to a phenomenon most consider impossible.

Following devotional prayers, offerings to the shrine, and feasting, the ritualistic and ceremonial Matachines dancers and their music became the center of attention. Adapted from Spain and the Aztec Empire, the customary dance and music are shared by local Mexican and Native groups. The performance typically features twelve elaborately costumed dancers who perform in two lines of six winding their way down through the middle of the crowd. In Las Vegas there are over fifty Matachines dancers and musicians. The troupe is introduced by drumming and high pitched hand jingles and rattles. Their dance-drama procession begins many yards away from the Lady of Guadalupe statue and slowly, deliberately moves closer. They end their dance at the foot of the shrine. The sound is hypnotic. It is a cacophony of loud, repetitive music. Together with two-foot high feather and silk headdresses, rattles and jingles on vibrant colored dresses and pants, it becomes easy to feel the trance like embrace with those shoulder-to-shoulder. As the Matachines near the shrine, the ambiance gets more heated. The finale is loud, syncopated music, and worshipful hands pointed toward the shrine. After applause, most Matachines members stay and intermingle with the crowd.

Once the strong emotional tenor subsided, the crowd moved away from the shrine and spread out into the gardens with lively chatter. I was slow to join them. Instead, I stayed behind frantically scribbling handwritten notes so that later I would not forget the context, and could quickly relive the indelible force of the music and dance. Augustina was a few steps in front of me, closer to the crowd. In a flash, out of the corner of my eye I saw Mrs. Perez come out her back door, stand close to the shrine, and reach up toward the eyes. Moments later I could see wet fluid

dripping from the eyes down to the chin. Mrs. Perez then bent down and with a slight cry said loudly, "The Lady, she is weeping."



Ill. 1: "Our Lady of Guadaloupe." Photograph by the author

People rushed back to the shrine. Many of the folks around me were falling to their knees, tearing up, asking Our Lady for her blessing, and thanking her for honoring them with the miracle. They were unbearably happy and moved. Mrs. Perez tried to dab the tears off, but they continued to fall. (Mrs. Perez was dabbing with cotton balls. I found out later that they had been soaked in water and olive oil).

I was shocked. Augustina had been looking the other direction, she didn't see what I saw. I said aghast, "wait, she PUT those tears on the statue. I saw her. These people are being fooled. They believe the tears are real. How can Mrs. Perez deceive everyone like this?"

People continued holding onto one another, praying, and hugging, saying they were now tied together like family; they felt as if the shrine's tears were an elixir for healing, and this phenomenon assured their faith in the future. Most were awestruck in the same moment I found it hard to look them in the eye.

I realized the performance of the Matachines set the emotional stage for what was to come. With the intensity of sound, music, and color, the audience had become open, raw to what would occur in just minutes. Ritual turned into sacred. If there were disbelievers among us, they must have questioned their own skepticism, and been shaken enough to unseat their logic. I saw fake tears turn into real tears, from the shrine to the community.

I took dozens of photographs, although I did not get a picture of Mrs. Perez and her sleight of hand. I wanted to ask her about her motives, so I started walking back toward the house. I told Augustina I felt compelled to talk to Mrs. Perez. Augustina practically begged me not to speak about this to Mrs. Perez, because it would interfere with this emotional and spiritual process. I kept repeating to Augustina that the tears on the shrine were fake. They were a product of an active participant who wanted the ritualized activity and venue to be embedded with potent symbolism. The result of Mrs. Perez's actions would appear to be the power of the supernatural. Perhaps instead, it ascribed the Perez family with some form of cultural power, or provided them a particular social identity within the Las Vegas Hispanic community. I was not certain, and Augustina did not want to hear what I was saying.

I thought people had been manipulated by a trusted family in the community. They were sharing comforting rituals with one another that could hold other, deeper meanings. Augustina seemed at peace with all of it. It was as if she didn't want to know the truth. She wanted to believe Our Lady was weeping despite my description of what I had just seen. Disappointed, I grappled with whether or not the people around me were so indoctrinated with an ideology that "don't ask; don't look" was part of the process of the tradition.

I had come to the Perez's to document all the components of the celebration, but what became most important was the dishonesty. Why was there a need to fabricate a miracle? It was not for the sake of money, (there were no fees or donations) or power, at least that I could tell. It appeared that this group of people accepted the exalted qualities promised and secretly demonstrated by the owners of

the shrine. The tears were shaping their spiritual world, posing as a harbinger of good health and a good future, but their real function, I think, was to strengthen existing beliefs.

I wondered where this fell in the realm of fakelore, and authenticity, or even within the contours of prophecy and cognitive dissonance . The crowd of people, and the musicians and dancers were not appropriating, or using spurious traditions to seal their Hispanic culture through this event. They were enacting centuries old interactions and beliefs from their cultures.

The core of beliefs, the connection between images of the shrine and the sightings in 1531, and the annual feasts and performances that reinforce the importance and meaning of Our Lady of Guadalupe are genuine. The people visiting the shrine believed there could be miraculous occurrences and they received substantiation. The literature and the other fieldworkers I consulted had little in the way of comparative experience and analysis.

I was flooded with doubt about tradition, authenticity, and motivation. If one of the participants had seen Mrs. Perez place tears on the shrine, would it undermine their beliefs, create conflict, or anger with the family? How many other cultural celebrations and belief systems are sustained through similar fiction? Did the entire Perez family know? Did anyone else know? Had it been done before? What if someone else, someone outside the Perez family had applied the tears—would it change the experience? Without answers, I can only posit the obvious, the rudimentary: traditions are a complex web, their meanings sometimes obscure to the fieldworker.

Ultimately, I concluded that the framing of the celebration, the people and their devotion, their needs and the symbolic meanings were all real even if Our Lady of Guadalupe's tears were not. This was a gathering of people who used traditional means to grow closer to one another, and to realize their personal, religious and spiritual goals. They had something that they would never forget; an experience that would stand out for the rest of their lives. Their emotion was authentic and they had made an investment in their culture through prayer, belief and participation. The shrine is a cornerstone of their religious identity, and the (fabrication of) tears deepened it. I did not reveal the truth to anyone but Augustina. I chose not to interfere with the appearance of a miracle and the power of belief.

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Olga Tokarczuk, *The Books of Jacob*

Galit Hasan-Rokem

The Books of Jacob (2014), the magnum opus of Polish Nobel Laureate 2018, Olga Tokarczuk, is scheduled to appear in English in November 2021. This reading is based on the excellent translations into Swedish (2015) and Hebrew (2020). The book's lengthy title may serve as a concise introduction to a work defying conventional genre categorizations: *The Books of Jacob/ or/ A Fantastic Journey/ Across Seven Borders/ Five Languages/ And Three Major Religions/ Not Counting the Minor Sects/ As Told by the Dead/ And as Supplemented by the Author/ Drawing From a Range of Books/ And Aided by Imagination/ The Which Being the Greatest Natural Gift/ Of Any Person* (Tokarczuk 2021). "The Books," plural, suggests both multi-vocality and the division into seven "books"—The Books of Mist, Sand, the Road, the Comet, Metal and Sulphur, the Distant Land, the Names—reflecting the author's penchant for fragments. The writing of this book, she has said, also took seven years.

The life of the historical character Jacob Frank (b. Buchach?, Ukraine 1726, d. Offenbach am Main 1791) serves as a major plot line of the book. In the last thirty-five years of his life Frank led a failed Jewish messianic movement. 'His' *Books* associate with the Five Books of Moses, echoing his status among his devotees.

The *Fantastic Journey* crisscrosses in many directions through Europe in restless flights—a key term in Tokarczuk's œuvre, *Flights* being the title of another of her masterpieces (English 2017). The *Books* and the *Journey* link wandering and writing: distant relatives and acquaintances correspond, and itinerants compose travelogues. The main scene is the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom in the late eighteenth century, before the divisions of Poland between the surrounding empires: Russia, Prussia, and Austro-Hungary. In the south the Ottoman Empire at its early stages of decline

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remains culturally inspiring, especially for Jews in the aftermath of the messianic drama of Shabtai Zvi (1626–76) and his conversion to Islam that were partly channeled into Frank's movement.

Poland's geopolitical situation lies behind "*Across Seven Borders*," echoing the formulaic number of the "*Books*." The enigmatic "*Five Languages*" contradict the linguistic abundance in the text: Polish and Latin of the nobility and the clergy; Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino of the Jews; Turkish and German echoing in the fictional world so intimately entangled with reality, a fiction that embraces history. The stylized use of enigmatic numbers highlights the literariness of the text that for the Russian Formalists was the distinctive feature of literary art and that Tokarczuk destabilizes by entangling fictive and real worlds.

"*Three Major Religions*" are Jews, Catholics and Muslims; "*The Minor Sects*" perhaps refers to the few Greek Orthodox individuals in the text, like the trickster figure, polyglot diplomatic juggler Anthony Kossakowski aka Moliwda, who subverting the borders between religions, languages and identities often implicates Frank's 'herd,' sometimes rescues them against all odds.

The key words of the title are "*As Told by the Dead*," partly because the literary consciousness of the entire book flows from a woman hovering between life and death, a mummy whose mind remains miraculously active although she seems dead. This woman, Jacob Frank's grandmother Jenta, infuses the text with transcendence and spirituality. Among the many dead whose fragmentary stories compose the text are also over three and a half million Jews of Poland most of whom perished in the Shoah because they did not manage to hide in the cave formed as the Hebrew letter Aleph in the vicinity of Korolivka, in which Jenta was laid to rest by her female relatives, and where about forty Jews survived during the dire days of the extermination of Polish and Ukrainian Jews. The echoes from this cave, part of an extensive network of caves in the Ternopil district scientifically researched only after WW2, resound throughout the *Books of Jacob*, lamenting the demise of Poland's Jews, and consequently Poland's loss of its multi-national identity.

After the dead, the author introduces herself as one who "*Supplemented*" the text having consulted "*A Range of Books*" many of which are mentioned in the text. The books signal knowledge and information and emerge as concrete material objects in the libraries of Jewish learned men or Polish literati and clergy. Thus, under the roof of Shabtai Zvi's acolyte Elisha Shor in the town of Rohatyn, the major text of Kabbalah, the *Zohar* (Book of Splendor) encounters the first Polish-language encyclopedia *Nowe Ateny* (New Athens) authored by eighteenth-century Polish priest Benedykt Joachim Chmielowski, who claimed that his work, published in 1745–46 in Lwów (Lviv), encompassed all the knowledge then available.

The last message of the title's main part is momentous: "*And Aided by Imagination/ The Which Being the Greatest Natural Gift/ Of Any Person*". Thus the prepublication English title, but I prefer the Swedish and Hebrew translations: "*Aided by Imagination/ That is Nature's Greatest Gift to the Human Being.*" Tokarczuk invests impressive intellectual and imaginative powers in the interpretation of Polish

identity and in the country's strategical position in the heart of Europe, where East and West as well as Slavic and Germanic intersect and overlap. This location turned Poland into a coveted object of surrounding imperial predators. The location also appealed to Jews who arrived there from diverse cultural backgrounds and languages. As mediators and translators, they validate Étienne Balibar's critical writings about the nation state, as personifications of "the Europeans," in stark contrast to Carl Schmitt's ideas (Hasan-Rokem 2008).

For Tokarczuk, the Frankist religious movement is a Polish phenomenon that grew out of the social structure, the geopolitical position and the cultural interfaces of her country carrying Poland on a carousel moving at times slowly and at times as a whirlwind. Frankism was a whirlwind that materialized in incessant mobility, flights of a Messianic spirit that seemed to escape itself, masterfully animated in Tokarczuk's book.

Historian Pavel Maciejko's (2015) excellent depiction of persons and events appearing in Tokarczuk's work is acknowledged by Tokarczuk in the detailed bibliographical note concluding *The Books of Jacob*: Frank's attitude to women—between deification, oppression, and sexual misuse; erotic rituals and orgies peaking in a scandalous event in 1756 in Lanckorona reported by Frank's adversaries; public debates under the auspices of the Catholic Church between the established leadership of the Jews ("the Talmudists") and the leaders of the Frankists culminating in the conversion of the latter to Christianity in Lwów in 1759; Frank's and his representatives' negotiations with Polish nobility and the Austrian monarch; his interrogation in Warsaw in 1760 and internment in the fortress of Częstochova, near the most important site of Catholic pilgrimage in Poland; and finally his death in Offenbach, surrounded by his daughter Eva and his remaining followers.

The historical references notwithstanding, the importance of *The Books of Jacob* lies in its revolutionary contribution to the literature of our time. Jewish history in Poland is not the main topic of the book, neither is it Poland as an unrestricted European space open to multiple cultures and languages. The protagonist of the book is literature itself. Modes of literary creativity are amply weighed in the text, in individual contemplations and in spoken exchanges. Many passages represent written documents produced due to people's mobility, and many chapters consist of correspondences conveying self-reflection or statements of political, aesthetical and religious views. Other letters more concretely request help, promote certain views and reveal state secrets, or even share lines of poetry. Hence emerges a chorus of many first-person singular voices, further splitting up obviously heterogeneous group identities. This literary form expresses the author's uncompromising resistance to all modes of nationalism, for which she has been harshly criticized in the public discourse of her homeland.

Examples discussed here are but a small drop of the waters of the great rivers of Europe flowing through the landscapes of the text, but Tokarczuk's explicitly and systematically fragmentary poetics charge each of the fragments with multiple meanings, each drop reflecting much of the entire world represented in the text.

The Swedish translation—like the Polish original—begins its pagination from the end, p. 982, and ends on p. 3. This lends the text an aspect of Yiddish and Hebrew orthography, written from right to left, an effect lost in the Hebrew translation, thus missing one of the concrete symbolical manifestations of Poland's pre-WW2 multi-cultural, multi-lingual character. The mutual mirroring of Christian and Jewish texts is explicitly stated from the first page of the text in the words posted on the door of the county prelate who is on his way to visit the kabbalist Elisha Shor, hoping to exchange books, a Polish book in Latin for a Jewish book in Aramaic (my translation, with omissions): "The day that passed/ Even by haste will not last."

The letter h of the word haste is written as its mirror image; since the artisans were Jews that whole inscription is somewhat Jewish. The priest Chmielowski represents the Polish Enlightenment's universalistic trend by proposing that if all people read the same books, they would share the same world while living in separation.

In a phantasmagoric prologue a piece of paper is swallowed, unclear what paper or who swallows. Ink blends with body fluids, letters decompose, the material disappears and the essential transcends, echoing prophet Ezekiel's initiation ritual of swallowing a scroll (Ezekiel 3:1–3). A woman, Jenta, who is introduced literally from her inside has swallowed an amulet thus becoming a textual body or an embodied text. She holds the magnetic center of consciousness of the entire work; hers is the overarching point of view on the events and the multitudes of *The Books of Jacob*.

The prologue echoes throughout the book as a reminder of the power of textual processes. The event described in it is however not chronologically the earliest in the plot. The synchronicity of some of the events remains obscure for the readers due to the partial contextualization. The narrative mechanism communicates the imbalance of knowledge between readers and author, and in parallel the limited knowledge of the Jews and Christians who lived in the relevant period in Poland. Chmielowski's vision of an all-encompassing universal knowledge and the idealism of European Enlightenment in general is thus contradicted.

The amulet swallowed by Jenta was intended by the kabbalist Shor to temporarily prevent her death that would have unsettled the preparations for a family wedding, but he then fails to undo the power of the amulet that has disappeared into her body. Jenta remains a souled mummy who sees all events as if hovering above humankind. The prologue introduces a metaphysical level of experience in the authorial stance personified in Jenta, suggesting that, like Jenta, the author gives up her life to write, a motif well known from the Romantics on.

Among the many writing persons in this text the person closest to Frank is Nahman the chronicler of the Frankists. Unlike Jenta, Nahman is a historical figure whose text has endured. He is aware of not being a prophet inspired by God but rather by the fatigue of the road. A messenger, not a leader, possibly formed by his past at the court of the founder of the Hasidic movement, Rabbi Israel Ba'al

Shemtov where tales on the Rabbi gained a sacred status, Nahman turned Frank into an object of admiration, demonstrating the role of narratives in creating charisma and turning events into historical consciousness. The captions for his fictional chronicles interspersed throughout the text, *resztki* (remains) resonate a potent mystical term in sixteenth-century Jewish mysticism, referring to the imprint of the Everlasting remaining after He contracted His presence to create the void in which the world was created, also echoing a twelfth-century concept current among German Jewish pietists—"He has caused his wonders to be remembered" (Psalm 111:4)—namely, that after God created the world, He withdrew from it leaving behind extraordinary phenomena to be told for remembrance. The events described by Nahman are certainly extraordinary. But unlike Jenta, his is a partial, human perspective, not the omniscient authorial voice, marking the difference between a chronicle and fiction.

A reflective focus on the art of writing permeates the book and in an *espace littéraire* à la Maurice Blanchot it resonates Tokarczuk's unconventional novel *Flights* (2017) published in Polish in 2007, seven years before *The Books of Jacob,* foretelling the later book in many ways, such as: brilliant fragmentary poetics; blurred boundaries between life and death; and the relationship of mobility and writing. The narrator's self-characterization, "I have become invisible, see-through. I am able to move around like a ghost, look over people's shoulders" (19), predicts Jenta.

The term fantastic (or magic) realism has been used to characterize *The Books of Jacob* which however pushes even that genre's borders. The apparent historical novel eludes realism and deconstructs any historical reading of the text. Non-linear fragmentary epic may be a more adequate term to describe Tokarczuk's magnum opus. In her Nobel lecture (2019), the author stated her longing for moral parables that universalize experiences, expressing her great trust in myths. Her words make explicit why I have chosen to share my reading of *The Books of Jacob*. Echoing Jenta, she said: "Seeing everything means recognizing the ultimate fact that all things that exist are mutually connected into a single whole … [it] also means a completely different kind of responsibility for the world, because it becomes obvious … that a decision taken in one part of the world will have an effect in another part of it, and that differentiating between 'mine' and 'yours' starts to be debatable."

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Ursula K. Le Guin, “The Matter of Seggri”

Victoria Hegner

When the latest season of “Star Trek Discovery” came out on Netflix, reviews rolled over, praising the gender diversity it represented: “The queerest Star Trek in history,” it was emphatically called. Sure enough, it was the queerest you could get on board the USS Discovery in the futurist time of 3188. However, for fans of science fiction literature—and particularly of feminist science fiction literature—the gender constellations on “Discovery” evoked only a weary smile. In feminist science fiction, one has—as early as the 1960s—embarked on journeys to worlds that challenge common ideas of gender and, thus, sexuality in far more radical ways. One has encountered worlds with not only three genders (as is demarcated in “Star Trek Discovery”) but also countless ones, has met living beings with flexible, temporary, or no genders at all and, again, has explored communities where “gender” is a perverted, very saddening condition that inescapably leads to societal exclusion and, sometimes, even to death. Furthermore, whereas “Star Trek” represents the diversity of genders as a utopia for which we all should strive, feminist sci-fi authors have often taken a much more ambivalent stand. For them, utopia and dystopia are never far apart: “Everyone’s shining city on a hill is someone else’s hell on earth,” as the sci-fi author Naomi Alderman pointedly wrote (2017).

One author who made the simultaneity of utopia and dystopia a dominant element of her novels, books, and essays and of all the future worlds, galaxies, and universes created within them was Ursula K. Le Guin (1929–2018). Probably one of the best-known feminist sci-fi authors of our times, she makes sex and gender a central topic, particularly in her Hainish Cycle—a series of novels and short stories set in a pangalactic association of more than 80 planets called the *Ekumen*. Placed

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far away from Earth in a distant future, the Hainish world turns into a huge laboratory of sociocultural and biological alternatives: a thought experiment on things and ways we take for granted in our own world and time. Utopic and dystopic at the same time, it constitutes a lustful and yet often quite horrific estrangement of humanity and its fundamental gendered constitution. It is exactly this mélange of joy and horror of all the different constellations of "men" and "women" and other genders, and of the intimate relationships and societal settings that come with them, that attracted me most to these stories. They had a profound impact on my anthropological feminist thinking because they are not only engagingly written literature. Instead, they are fictitious ethnographies: thick descriptions of everyday life, inspired by actual experiences, places, and events, that are, although invented, grounded in poetic theoretical thinking on the ways people live together, creating meaning in and of their existence (Narayan 1999). In their fantastic—i.e. their speculative—character, those tales rearranged my perspectives on my "own" reality, time and again. They showed me my "blind spots" and the unreflected ideologies that guide my life and studies, and invited new, almost adventurous approaches to the limitless ways of life and world views on Earth.

It has certainly been widely acknowledged that Ursula K. Le Guin's writing reveals anthropological sensitivity, which again, reflects not least the influence of her upbringing and family background, since both of her parents—Theodora and Alfred Kroeber—were well-known anthropologists, Alfred Kroeber being the first professor of Anthropology appointed at the University of California, Berkeley. Le Guin grew up surrounded by ethnologists, whom she perceived as a "mixture of exciting minds and backgrounds … that did something to my head, something good" (Curry 2018, 18:34–18:40 min). Many tales and novels of the Hainish Cycle are considered masterpieces of anthropologically inclined science fiction and, simultaneously, groundbreaking in feminist literature, challenging any gender arrangements taken for granted. The one that reverberates strongest in my anthropological and feminist mind is a rather little known "side tale" of the Hainish world, i.e. the short story "The Matter of Seggri," first published in 1994 in the science fiction and fantasy magazine *Crank!*. Not only does it provide an artfully written ethnography about a future world, but it also courageously opens up our understanding of queerness and, thereby, goes far beyond the idea of gender and sexual diversity so joyfully portrayed in the "Star Trek Discovery" appraisal. The tale turns the idea of queerness radically around and spells out that even the "straightest," most essentialist binary gender regime is ultimately queer in the sense that it appears as non-normative from a terrestrial heterosexual perspective. "The Matter of Seggri" has a strong feminist impetus and creates a world of empowered women, yet, it immanently ponders the question: What price would we be willing to pay for a queer and feminist utopian world? What should this world look like? And, how fair could it be—or would it ever be fair? Thereby, the tale works as a strong reminder to keep challenging your own perspectives, no matter how right, appropriate, and open-minded they feel. It is this form of self-reflectiveness and, in

that, vulnerability that takes us, in my perspective, to the heart of anthropology—it is this that makes the discipline such a challenging, yet ever so often fulfilling utopian endeavor.

In "The Matter of Seggri" we encounter a society in which the division between "men" and "women" is an unquestionable truth: power relations between genders are (from a terrestrial perspective) reversed: "[T]he men have all the privilege and the women have all the power. It's … a stable arrangement," (p. 9) as one central protagonist, called Merriment, observes. She arrives on the planet as a *Mobile*: a person who is sent out by the planetary association to maintain or initiate contact with the *Ekumen* and—similar to a cultural anthropologist—explore the culture in every possible aspect, including food, gender, sports, technology, religion, mythology, and many more.

As the story unfolds, the reader dives deeply into Seggrian culture and society and its transformation over more than a thousand years. Le Guin develops different narratives: reports, ego-documents, tales-within-tales, and ethnographic fieldnotes. Through them, one gets to know the complex and yet, from a terrestrial perspective, rather disturbing *rite de passage*—the ceremony of *Severance*—whereby Seggrians celebrate young boys' separation from their families at the age of 11. A new stage in life begins, as the boys start their life-long stay in so-called castles and get prepared for their main purpose in life, that is, procreation. They will never see their families again. One also gains an insight into the role of sports and games, as they differ between men and women. Le Guin, furthermore, offers an elaborate description of the matrilinear kinship system and gives an account of Seggri's romantic fiction literature. Finally, she describes in detail the historical events of the *Mutiny*—an insurrection of men against the ruling gender division that gradually led to a less segregated society.

At first sight, men seem to lead a comfortable life, residing in castles surrounded by beautifully maintained walled gardens and parks. Their garments are of gold and crimson, embellished with fine embroidery. They spent their days with a diversity of sports and games and acquire great skills in martial arts. In addition to these "manly" activities, they are also very knowledgeable in seemingly rather feminine occupations, such as sewing up their own clothes and competing in the splendor of their attire. Women, on the other hand, live in towns separated from the walled parks. Most of them are occupied with heavy physical work on farms they reclaimed from a parched land of stones and, thus, ensure the planet's economic wealth. They never wear fine clothes, instead walking around in uniform greyish dresses. The parks are forbidden territories for them. The women supply the men with food and other necessary goods that they leave at the parks' gates. Their way of life appears much harsher and less desirable than those of men. However, they are the ones who rule and exercise the legislative and executive power in society and, thereby, other than men, have the chance to lead a self-determined life. The distribution of power on Seggri clearly alludes to the patriarchal system on Earth, mirroring its oppressive

character towards women. But it is also much more than that: it is a (queer) feminist utopia in all its desirable potentials and cruel shortcomings.

On Seggri, as the reader gets to know, people suffer from a gene defect that causes a great imbalance of gender: only every sixth child is born a boy, and only few of the boys reach puberty. Considering the unequal numbers of males and females, Seggrian society relies heavily on the reproductive strength of men and its efficient use. Hence, at the age of 15, men have to start to work in so-called *fuckeries*. Women go there in order to get pregnant or/and to satisfy their sexual desires. Men are paid per bout of intercourse. Those among them who have a high rate of impregnations and sire large numbers of male children, rank the highest among Seggrian men and acquire the status of *Great Champions*: sex with them is the most expensive.

Until *Severance*, boys grow up in a family of mothers and sisters in so-called motherhouses: multigenerational households of (grand-)mothers and (grand-)children. They get spoiled and receive outstandingly kind care. Seggrians boys are, however, only provided rudimentary education: they can neither read nor write, nor do they receive any instruction in the sciences and humanities. As a Seggrian woman explains: "It weakens a man's sense of honor, makes his muscles flabby, and leaves him impotent: 'What goes to the brain takes from the testicles.' Men have to be sheltered from education for their own good (p. 10)."

This poignant and—at the same time—often appalling reversion of terrestrial patriarchy is finely interwoven with elements of queerness—forms of sexual norms beyond heterosexuality. Here, the tale offers a double reverse, as it turns a gender dystopia, again, into a utopian space. Thus, as the reader learns, the central element of the Seggrian kinship system is female homosexuality and same-sex marriage. Biological "mothers" are married to "lovemothers," and women can be both mother and lovemother at the same time. The kinship ties described are never only harmonious, however, they are grounded in deep affection—love and compassion—for one another, as well as being characterized by the idea of social fairness towards all members of society, women and men alike. Within this framework, Seggri portrays a futurist world that offers, especially for lesbian and bisexual women, a society without discrimination. At the same time, lesbianism, as a central social element of society, is not, as is laid open, free from (capitalist) exploitation and sexism, and—as is shown once men demand an active role in society—not devoid of intolerance against other genders, despite the claimed idea of equality.

In this context, Le Guin traces the painful renegotiation of the societal system after the time of the *Mutiny*: both—women and men alike—are open for changes. But to create something new and, thus, to feel, think, act, and perceive outside or beyond the cultural structure and context in which one is socialized is an endeavor hard to fulfill. No matter how unfair and oppressive a system might have been, it has shaped one's identity and self-conception that one cannot escape. Accordingly, Le Guin offers an evocative portrayal of how people start to create alternatives out

of the lives and the symbolic systems they had known, and, thereby, start to gradually "rewrite" or redefine them. In this manner, the tale provides a poetic analysis of how fundamental societal changes are executed. For Seggrians, for example, who grew up in a homosexual kinship system, a marriage or romantic relationship between people of different sexes is hardly conceivable and difficult to think of and express; this is mirrored in language, since no distinct terms exist for such an arrangement. In one scene of the tale, the reader overhears a conversation between a man and his mother. The strict gender division has slowly dissolved: *fuckeries* and castles are gradually closed down, boys are no longer separated from their families, men are allowed into schools and colleges. Ardar Dez, one of the leaders of the *Mutiny*, returns to his motherhouse. In a conversation with his mother, he shares with her his greatest wish:

> "I want to get married." Her eyes widened. She brooded a bit, and finally ventured, "To a man." "No. To a woman. I want a normal, ordinary marriage. I want to have a wife and be a wife." Shocking as the idea was, she tried to absorb it. She pondered, frowning. "All it means," I said, "is that we'd live together just like any married pair. We'd set up our own daughterhouse, and be faithful to each other, and if she had a child I'd be its lovemother along with her …." (32)

Ardar Dez formulates a Seggrian utopia through a symbolic system—the language—he is used to and, thereby, extends the limits of imagination and societal conventions. Still, as the tale goes, he will never get married and never "be a wife." Instead, he becomes a *Mobile*—a cultural anthropologist of futurist worlds: a professional stranger derived from his experience of being a stranger in his own world.

Through all these stories, characters and different constellations, "The Matter of Seggri"—as a comment on patriarchy and a thought experiment of feminist utopia—does not indeed escape the binarism of gender. However, it is an emphatic story of queerness. It trains our anthropological and feminist awareness that there are always other ways to do things. Reading (and watching) sci-fi—as explorers of lifeworlds that, although not far away, might often be as strange as the most distant planet—therefore, matters a lot. Let us take the adventure and, henceforth, make science fiction part of our disciplinary "canon."

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Rosa P., Yooko

Dorothee Hemme

Yooko (2000) ist eines von vielen breit rezipierten Werken der im Südschwarzwald lebenden Autorin Ulrike Pacholleck. Unter dem Pseudonym Rosa P. befähigt das „kleine Frauenzimmer, Baujahr ’65“ mit ihren Texten eine wachsende Zahl von Leser*innen zur Herstellung einer „Capsulewardrobe“, einer langlebigen Garderobe mit wenigen aufeinander abgestimmten Kleidungsstücken. Zu ihren meistgelesenen Werken gehören die Bücher *Granny Squares postmodern* (2013), *Ein Schnitt – Vier Styles* (2014) sowie der inzwischen in der 7. Auflage gedruckte Bestseller *Näh Dir ein Kleid* (2016).

Seit etwa 2019 veröffentlicht die Autorin auf ihrer Homepage http://www.rosape.de Texte für gestrickte Kleidung, die alle einen eigenen, in der Regel mit Doppelbuchstaben versehenen Namen wie Canelle, Stiina, Tuula oder Eezra tragen. Begleitet werden die Veröffentlichungen von Blogeinträgen auf der Homepage sowie posts in den sozialen Medien. Sie zeigen die maschenweise Entstehung eines neuen Designs oder Varianten in unterschiedlichen Wollarten, hergestellt vom Rosa P.-Strickteam. Die Influencerin in der Strick- und Näh-Szene hat viele Follower. Sie entwirft beliebte, zeitlose Designs. Vor allem aber beherrscht sie das Format der Anleitung meisterlich.

In handwerklichen Herstellungsprozessen gibt es auf dem Weg vom Anfang zum Ende viele Momente, an denen die Dinge scheitern können. In der Überwindung dieser Momente entsteht das implizite Wissen, wächst das Können. Damit wir nicht immer alle Fehler wiederholen, damit sich die Welt weiterentwickelt, spielt Anleitung eine wichtige Rolle. Das *Deutsche Wörterbuch* von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm vermerkt Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts unter dem

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Stichwort Anleitung: „du gibst mir gute an leitung dazu, leitest mich wol dazu an." Der Eintrag verweist auf die Bedeutung und lange vorherrschende Praxis der persönlichen Unterweisung bei der Weitergabe von Erfahrungswissen. Heute ergänzen schriftliche Anleitungen die Wissensweitergabe. Der *Duden* kennt zu dem Stichwort zwei Bedeutungen: „1. Anweisung, Unterweisung; 2. Zettel mit einer aufgedruckten Anleitung". Solche Zettel kommen in Form von Rezepten, Gebrauchsanweisungen, Aufbau-, Reparatur- und Montageanleitungen, Schnittmustern und Strickanleitungen vielfach im Alltag vor. Eine schriftliche Anleitung bricht Prozeduren zwischen Hand, Hirn und Material auf einzelne Arbeitsschritte und ein allgemeinverständliches Niveau herunter. Sie kommt einfach daher. Hinter ihr liegen oft Welten aus komplexen Wissensbeständen: historisch gewachsene Notationsformen – Zutaten und Mengenliste zuerst, dann die Arbeitsschritte –, komplexe Codierungssysteme wie z.B. die Notenschrift, oder ausgeklügelte, in globalen Lieferketten produzierte Spannplattensysteme, aus denen ganz unterschiedliche Möbel zusammengefügt werden können. Anleitungen haben eine eigene Sprache. Wo sie nicht mit Zeichnungen und Zeichen auskommen gilt: „Die Sprache von guter Technik-Dokumentation kennt keinen Wechsel von Sequenzmustern zur Erhöhung der Lesespannung, kein Spiel mit der Sprachrhythmik …, kein Variieren von Begriffen, kein Salz in der Sprachsuppe" (Gust 2021). Das Schreiben einer Anleitung ist also voraussetzungsvoll. Es hat sich zu einer eigenen Branche entwickelt, die von CE-Kennzeichnungen und DIN-Normen flankiert wird und einflussreiche Texte hervorgebracht hat. So konnten ganze Teile der Weltgesellschaft dank der Zettel eines schwedischen Möbelhauses dazu befähigt werden, Regale, Schränke und Einbauküchen eigenhändig und oft nur mithilfe eines Inbusschlüssels zusammenzubauen.

Im Repertoire meines Könnens spielen Strickanleitungen eine Rolle. Seit ich als Kind unter persönlicher Anleitung meiner Tante Gertrud das kleine 1x1 des Strickens erlernte, habe ich mich durch viele Anleitungen gearbeitet – und dabei wiederholt die frustrierende Erfahrung gemacht, dass die Vollendung oft am Ende scheitert: Die Einzelteile sind fertig, das Maschenbild ist sauber – und wenn ich sie mit Nadel und Faden zusammengesetzt habe, verunzieren wulstige Nähte das Strickstück. Meine Lehrmeisterin hat mir zwar das Stricken, aber nicht das Vernähen mit Maschenstich oder unsichtbaren Nähten beigebracht. Und Strickanleitungen machen sich im Unterschied zu Tante Gertrud keine Anschauung von den Fähigkeiten ihrer Schülerin, um die Unterweisung anzupassen. Sie nennen in Hinblick auf Fertigstellung in der Regel „Teile spannen, anfeuchten und trocknen lassen, Schulter, Arm- und Seitennähte schließen", und setzen die Nähfähigkeit stillschweigend voraus.

Eine Freundin empfiehlt mir Rosa P., die „Queen des top-down-knittings" als Lösung für mein fehlendes Können: Nahtlose, in einem Stück von oben nach unten gestrickte Modelle. Das habe ich noch nie gemacht!

Ich suche aus dem über 56 Strickanleitungen umfassenden Œuvre Yooko aus – nicht zuletzt, weil ein Instagramm-post zu diesem Jäckchen auch noch ein

Rüblikuchenrezept vorhält, mit dem man sich – zur Corona-Devise „#stayhomeandknit“ – die Strickstunden versüßen kann.

Der Text zur Herstellung von Yooko umfasst sechs Seiten. Auf der ersten Seite finden sich die Basics: Ein kurzes Intro erklärt zunächst grob angewandte Techniken und das Design des Kleidungsstücks: „Der kurze kastige Yooko Cardigan wird in einem Stück von oben nach unten mit Raclanzunahmen gestrickt. Die Säume werden von einem Mäusezähnchenabschluss geschmückt. Die Ärmel werden mit dem Magic Loop oder einem Nadelspiel rund gestrickt. Das Halsbündchen und die Knopfblenden werden angesetzt.“ Es folgen – wie bei allen gängigen Strickanleitungen – Angaben zum Schwierigkeitsgrad (Stufe 3 von 5), zur Größenberechnung, zur Garnwahl, zu erforderlichen Materialien, zur Maschenprobe und zu genutzten Mustern. Die letzte Seite enthält eine kompakte Übersicht, in der alle auf den Seiten 1–5 genutzten Abkürzungen aufgelöst und Stricktechniken erklärt werden. Dazwischen steckt alles, was mich von einigen hundert Metern Garn zu einem kleidsamen Etwas führen soll. Charakteristische Textpassagen lauten so: „1. R. (HR): 1M re str (VT1), 1 Zre, MMa, 1Zli, 4 M re str, (Ärmel 1), 1 Zre, MMa, 1 Zli, 29 M re str (RT), 1 Zre, MMa, 1 Zli, 4M re str (Ärmel 2), 1Zre, MMa, 1Zli, 1Mre (VT2) (= 8 M zugenommen) Ausschnittzunahme nicht vergessen, s. rechte Spalte.“

Ich lese, verstehe nicht und beruhige mich mit Erkenntnissen aus Forschungen zu Handwerkskönnen und Körperwissen: Implizites Handwerkswissen expliziert sich am Objekt und man lernt es – wie das Fahrradfahren – mit dem Objekt. Die Anleitung versteht man daher auch nicht theoretisch. Ohne Stricknadeln und Wolle kein „making knowledge“ (Marchand 2011).

Von Tim Ingold (2014: 71) habe ich gelernt, dass nicht ich der Wolle meinen Willen aufzwinge, um sie in Form zu bringen, sondern dass wir zwei eine „Korrespondenz“ führen: stundenlang, tagelang, wochenlang, hoffentlich jahrelang – haptisch, visuell, olfaktorisch. Erfahrungsgemäß korrespondiere ich besonders ungezwungen und ausdauernd, wenn die Wolle hochwertig und teuer ist – das fördert den Gestaltschließungszwang und später auch meine Freude am Tragen. Ich kontaktiere Andrea, einer von Rosa P. „geliketen“ Handfärberin im Schwarzwald auf und ordere Suri Cloud – Wolle aus Fasern des Suri-Alpakas und Seide – in einem tiefen Grün. Andrea nennt die Farbe Colorado Spruce. Ich nenne sie Lüneburger Heide-Pine und nehme die Korrespondenz auf, während ich 1500 Meter Stränge zu Knäulen wickle. Suri ist federleicht, fluffig, schimmernd und reißfest. Nicht ganz Kiefer, auch ein bisschen Eiche. Sie riecht noch etwas nach Essig.

„#Rauolaschdriggt“ – die, die die Rosa P.-Facebookgruppe moderiert, bei der es Hilfe zu allen stricktechnischen Fragen zu den Rosa-P-Modellen gibt – wird nicht müde, die Notwendigkeit von Maschenproben zu betonen, damit das Kleidungsstück am Ende auch gut sitzt. Denn jede Hand ist einzigartig und verstrickt dieselbe Wolle anders stramm oder locker. Ich folge dem Rat, berechne meine Größe, ändere die Nadelstärke und lege los. Der Anfang ist schwer, die Form muss Masche für Masche erst Konturen kriegen. Die Anleitung weiß das und listet jede Reihe

einzeln auf. Das gibt Sicherheit. Schnell kommt Routine. Komplizierte, in Strickschrift verfasste Rapportdiagramme gibt es nicht, stattdessen werden Maschenmarkierer (MM) – kleine Metallringe – an den Stellen auf den Nadeln mitgenommen, an denen in jeder Reihe Raclanzunahmen zu stricken sind. Das Hirn muss nicht zählen, es wird erinnert. Ich nehme die praktische Übersicht von Seite 6 zur Hand, bis ich nach links geneigte (Zli) und nach rechts geneigte Zunahmen (Zre) verinnerlicht habe – und mache ein Hörbuch an.

„Bitte lies den folgenden Abschnitt ganz durch, bevor du beginnst!“, sagt der Text, damit ich verstehe, dass Raclanzunahmen für die Ärmel nicht im gleichen Rhythmus wie für Vorder- und Rückenteil erfolgen und Ausschnittzunahmen nicht vergessen werden wollen. Ich mach das Hörbuch aus, lese, erfinde mir eine kleine Tabelle, die die unregelmäßigen Zunahmen veranschaulicht, stricke und finde am Ende der Raclanpasse genaue Angaben im Text, wie viel ich jetzt wo genau zugenommen haben sollte. Als Mutter von 5 Kindern weiß Rosa P., dass in langen Lernprozessen kleine Schritte und Erfolgskontrollen die Freude bei der Arbeit steigern. Ich feiere meine erste nahtlos gestrickte, maschenzahlmäßig hundert Prozent stimmige Raclanpasse und trenne die Ärmelmaschen vom Rumpf. Yooko ist jetzt pellerinenartig. „#Whenthehippoknits“, die eine Yooko in weiß aufgenadelt hat, postet auf Instagram ein Bild, auf dem sie die fertige Raclanpasse trägt. Ich kann auch schon hineinschlüpfen und stelle fest, dass sie bis hier passt.

Jetzt geht's nur noch hin- und her. Strickflow. Linke Reihen, rechte Reihen. Ich streife in Gedanken durch Kiefernwälder, erfinde einen Firmennamen für mein Business, überlege Lockdown-Freizeitaktivitäten, definiere meine Dienstleistungsangebote, schmiede Ideen für die homeschooling-Didaktik (kleine Schritte und mehr Erfolgserlebnisse!), höre Podcasts … und stelle fest, dass Yooko lang genug ist. Jetzt kommen die Mäusezähnchen, die hatte mir Tante Gertrud schon mal beigebracht. Für den Ärmel muss ich ein Youtube-Tutorial bemühen, aber auch die Magic-Loop-Methode hat Flowpotenzial. Es geht immer im Kreis. Wie lang so ein Ärmel ist. Ob ich mich der Traditionserfindung der Rosa P.-Follower anschließen und auch ein Bild posten sollte von mir und der gutsitzenden einarmigen Yooko?

Ärmel zwei wird noch schneller fertig, der Gestaltschließungszwang entfaltet seine Wirkung. Die Blenden sind rasch angestrickt und am Ende lerne ich, dass man zum Stricken einer Kordel gar keine Strickliesel benötigt. Mit zwei Nadeln stricke ich nach drei erklärenden Sätzen in der Anleitung einen „I-Cord“ – eine vielseitige Erfindung der in Großbritannien geborenen Designerin und Handstricklehrerin Elisabeth Zimmermann, die in vielen Rosa P.-Designs zur Anwendung kommt.

Jetzt bin ich am Ende der Seite 5 im Text bei der Rubrik „Fertigstellen“. Ich soll „alle Fäden vernähen. Die Jacke waschen und spannen. Die Knöpfe annähen und die Kordel in den Tunnel einziehen.“ Knöpfe kann ich. Fertig!

Ich freu mich. Das waldgrüne Ding sitzt, wärmt, schmiegt sich. Als ich es das erste Mal trage, bekomme ich Komplimente und Nachfragen, ob das schwierig war? Nee, war es nicht. Weil die Anleitung so gut war.

Yooko herzustellen lehrt mich: Anleitungen sind eine Explikation von Erfahrungswissen. Sie zu formulieren bedeutet, den Arbeitsprozess vom Ergebnis her zu verstehen und möglichst alle Fehler auszuschließen, die man auf dem Weg von vorne nach hinten begehen kann. Im Yooko-Anleitungstext erkenne ich nicht nur das technische Strickerfahrungswissen von Rosa P. Darin steckt auch die pragmatische Didaktik von jemandem, der im dichten Alltag mit Kindern die Kunst der Anleitung sowie den besten Weg zum Strickflow vielfach erprobt hat. Zum einen in Form von bis ins Detail durchdachten, aber einfachen Erklärungen und Erfolgskontrollen. Wenn man sich genau an den Text hält, kann nicht viel schief gehen. Zum anderen in Form einer ausgewogenen Mischung aus Monotonie und Nervenkitzel im Design: Die Anleitung weiß, dass das Ganze nicht zu viel Konzentration erfordern darf und einen Rhythmus braucht, wenn man es zu Ergebnissen bringen möchte. Und sie weiß auch, dass ein paar Herausforderungen nötig sind, wenn das Prozedere die gute Erfahrung von einem Zuwachs der Fähigkeiten enthalten soll. An dem Ergebnis, dass sich anhand des Anleitungszettels erzielen lässt, erkennt man also nicht nur die Befähigung des Schülers, sondern auch die Person der Lehrmeisterin, die dem Schüler in Form der Anleitung gegenübersitzt und „wol dazu anleitet".

Der „Zettel" ist vom „du" also nicht zu trennen. Diese Anleitung ist aber nicht nur der Text, sondern auch der soziale Kontext, in den er dank der sozialen Medien eingebunden ist. Er macht aus dem „du" ein „wir", eine *community of practice*. Das kommt dem Zuwachs handwerklichen Könnens sehr entgegen, denn hier findet ein reger Austausch von Erfahrungswissen statt, wird Rat erteilt sowie Kniffe und Hacks geteilt. Und es wird ein Fundus an Ergebnissen sichtbar, der zu eigenen Interpretationen der Designs verführt.

Während ich das schreibe, hat das Rosa P.-Strickteam den Maiija-Crossover aufgenadelt. Ich muss den Text daher jetzt beenden und Wolle besorgen. Und die Tabelle posten, mit der ich Yooko gepimpt habe …

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On Disciplinary Nomadism: Richard Bauman's *Verbal Art as Performance*

Deborah A. Kapchan

Prelude: reading matters

When thinking about a book that changed the course of my early life, I come up with several titles: May Sarton's *Journal of a Solitude*, Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*, Theodore Roethke's *The Far Field*, William Carlos Wiliams' *Pictures from Breughal*. So many more. This was the late 1970s. I was in high school in suburban New York, and these books pointed me forward. They were a way out of a turbulent childhood, and a way in to the soul of the world.

Poetry carved out my internal literary landscape, forming the emotional substrate of my existence early on. But what book steered me to my professional vocation? There was only one.

In September 1985 I was in a small town in Ohio. I was twenty-seven and had just returned from three years in Morocco, teaching English for two years and doing research for a longitudinal study on literacy for the third. That research compared two fieldsites, one in the Middle Atlas Mountains and the other in urban Marrakech. It also came with two residences and a Renault Quatrelle that took me between them. My job was to interview the parents of children in both places, to gauge their attitudes towards education and beliefs of all kinds. I became an ethnographer before I knew what that was.

The Middle Atlas Mountains are populated with Imazighen—"Berbers"—who over centuries of invasion went to higher elevations to escape the struggles for domination taking place on the plains and in the Imperial cities. They built houses

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of stone among holm oak and cedar trees, watering their sheep in the lakes of volcanic plateaus, and sharing the land with Barbary macaques and wild boar.

Marrakech, on the other hand, was dense with people in the winding streets of the *medina*, a mix of Arabs, Imazighen and Saharans who spoke multiple languages. The city was founded by the Almorovids in 1070 CE, but its culture peaked in 1525 as the capital of the Saadian Empire in a united Morocco. When I lived there in 1984 it was alive with story tellers and orators in Jma al-Fna square.

In Marrakech, the *ryad* where my husband and I lived was hundreds of years old. Built of thick stone and adobe, it had small tiles in the wall and floors that created a hallucinating geometry of white, cobalt blue, and turquoise. There was a library in the *ryad*—books of anthropology by Vincent Crapanzano, Vanessa Maher, Paul Rabinow, and Elizabeth Fernea (who would later be my colleague at the University of Texas). These authors told stories like the one I was living: describing changes that occur when culture meets culture and both are changed thereby.

And yet, these were not the books that brought me to graduate studies in Folklore. At that time I did not see myself in academia. I had come to Morocco with a BA in English Literature from New York University, and although I had collected Moroccan folk tales (so I could translate and teach them to my students in language class), this was a passion, not a career path. I was still a dreamy poet, doing whatever was needed to get by.

After three years in Morocco however, my job prospects were slim. I had to return to the United States. But how? I was by then fluent in Arabic and French and was an experienced ESL (English as a second language) teacher. My husband had the same skills. Linguistics seemed a viable option. We applied to several graduate programs and went to the one that offered us funding and married student housing. We went to Ohio University in rural America. It was an easy landing.

For two years I taught English every weekday to OU's international students, walking the half mile to the campus, through autumnal explosions of orange and red, through drifts of snow in the winter. In exchange I got an education in Linguistics. I studied "markedness theory" in Phonetics, Chomsky's deep structure in Syntax. I learned how historical linguists reconstructed dead languages and traced their roots to the Indo-European lineage. I took classes in pedagogy for ESL as well, and muddled my way through a required course in statistics.

It was not until my second year however, that I took the class that changed my life: Sociolinguistics, taught by Beverly Olson Flanigan. That's when I discovered the book that allowed me to think of myself as a scholar. That book was Richard Bauman's *Verbal Art as Performance*.

Artful words

In Bauman's volume I discovered poetics. It resonated with my love for words. Here were scholars that saw the artfulness in the everyday, the beauty in the small

details of human exchange. The Russian Formalists called it *ostranenie.* It was the job of the artist to make the "familiar strange," and, I thought, to wake humans up from the somnambulism of existence.

Form and style were performative. They changed minds and bodies, and the environments in which they lived. Performance broke through into another level of consciousness. And yet the verbal artists were not the economic or cultural elite. They were the folk, the people. The mystery and miracle of communication could be found in the poetry of the vernacular. It was handmade, rough-hewn and serendipitous, like my life.

What's more, verbal art was about the *doing:* "Art is a means of experiencing the *process* of creativity [emphasis added]," Shklovsky said. "The artifact itself is quite unimportant" (1990: 6). I signed on.

Verbal Art as Performance was transdisciplinary avant la lettre: the authors "operated at an intellectual level beyond the boundaries which separate academic disciplines, sharing an interest in the esthetic dimension of social and cultural life in human communities as manifested through the use of language." For Bauman, performance was "artistic action." He reoriented the study of folklore towards the "artistic event ... involving performer, art form, audience, and setting" (Bauman 1975: 290). To study spoken art was to understand the text in its *context,* and the social and pragmatic forces that shaped the utterance.

Many of these constraints related to the "law of genre" (Derrida 1980) and all the authors in *Verbal Art as Performance* described these socio-literary systems scrupulously. But what captured my imagination was not only the way communication was socially constructed, but how artists played with rules to invent novelty. Not only repetition of the known, but transgression of the same. The emergence of difference arose on the margins, among the rule breakers.

The emphasis on the emergent, on the uniqueness of each performance, appealed to a spiritual dimension in me that honored the ephemeral nature of all being. Verbal art was like a dancing body in space, or like a voice singing in a forest: its shapes and tones dependent on the humidity in the air and the density of the trees. Such performances could not be captured, only represented and interpreted after the fact. What's more, the meaning of any given utterance depended on the interpretative "frame" of its cultural context, the way it was "keyed." Meaning was not transcendent, but temporal, a confluence of innumerable factors, some predictable, some aleatory. Performance not only grew out of these factors, but constituted them. It was all of a piece.

Bauman defined performance as "assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence" (1977: 11). It was conscious, not mechanical. Like a tea ceremony, like monks creating a mandala of many-colored sands, the performer of verbal art winked at her interlocutors: "I know what I'm doing. I'm aware and awake," she said.

Metacommunication. This was the dimension in which I longed to live. I could make this a career.

If Bauman's essay opened the door to my next incarnation, Babcock's chapter gave me wings to fly through. Her contribution was about metanarrative: the reflexive propensity to create sign systems about sign systems. Is this not what distinguishes human communication from other forms? Aristotle thought the definition of God was "thought about thought," which might be considered a form of Hegel's "self-consciousness," noted Babcock, following Burke (Babcock 1977: 62). She found philosophy in literary form, metaphysics in human communication and artistry.

But finding the wonder in oral communication, God in the word so to speak, required a different focus—not simply the hermeneutics of textual analysis, but its embodied form in performance. "Metacommunication," says Babcock, is "any element of communication which calls attention to the speech event as a performance" (Babcock 1977: 66). Performance is the connecting fiber between word and being and a turn to a more holistic understanding of verbal art. Tuning myself to the reflexivity of performance illuminated the path of ethnography for me, not just as a profession, but as a raison d'être. "If we listen, every storyteller tells us 'the story of [his] story itself,'" Babcock notes in closing (75).

In Gossen's piece, "Chamula Genres of Verbal Communication," he does just that: he *listens*. He hears and records the way the Chamula divide their oral genres. He finds not only esthetic patterns, but ethics embedded in the pragmatics of performance. Gossen demonstrates that there are no "small" or insignificant genres, but that any performance may be a portal into understanding cultural worldviews. His article inspired me to investigate the kaleidoscope of Moroccan expression, including oral narratives such as gossip.

In Abrahams's article, "The Training of the Man of Words in Talking Sweet," a very different worldview is presented. The categories of verbal art in St.Vincent are woven into a cultural system that distinguishes between the "rude" and the "behaved," "talking broad" and "talking sweet." These categories are gendered, no matter who in fact voices them. Talking sweet is related to the feminine, the home, and an idea of respectability, whereas talking broad is associated with a masculine world of transgression outside of domestic space. Between these poles exist intermediate landscapes: the yard and the festival, with their respective genres. Each of these expressive forms embodies an esthetic (such as the esthetic of the cool), and with it, an ethics, a way to be human in a society of shared norms. In revealing the gendered aspects of verbal art, and their symbolic relations to space, Abrahams broke the ground and laid the foundation for my subsequent work on oratory and feminine agency in the Moroccan marketplace.

In the last chapter of *Verbal Art as Performance*, Joel Sherzer analyzes the poetics of Cuna verbal art, including the parallelism employed in ritual speech. He demonstrated that oral literature is just as complex as any written genre, if not more so. "The Cuna word ikala," says Sherzer in his chapter, "can mean 'adventure, custom, journey, lesson, path, way.' We can also use it to refer to 'literature,' as long

as a distinction is made between 'Western' literature and Cuna literature" (Sherzer 1977: 134).

Ikala: literature as a path. It had always been mine, and now that path led to a career. Like my life, verbal art was an emergent composition, an improvisation always teetering on the edge of rules and their transgression. Verbal art, like play, depended on recycling the past to create a different present and on the paradox of structure and chaos, emergent in different measure in each moment.

Words that matter

I applied to doctoral programs at both the University of Pennsylvania and Indiana University. I got into both. I had to choose. But in fact the universe chose for me, because at the end of the final semester, I was several months pregnant, and since my mother lived in a suburb of Philadelphia, since this was my first child, since I was wading into unfamiliar waters, and since Philadelphia seemed to hold more job prospects for my husband, we moved east. The decision was pragmatic, as most big decisions are. I began my studies at UPenn in September 1987, giving birth to my daughter two weeks into the program.

I did not study with Bauman, but with Roger Abrahams, diving into the wonders of genre and their play. Dan Ben Amos was central here as well. I still teach genre theory today.

I did not study with Bauman, but when I finished my PhD, I went to Indiana University as a visiting professor at the Folklore Institute. Bauman was on a fellowship at Stanford that year. In fact, it was his departure on sabbatical that allowed them to hire me.

I did not study with Bauman, but when I finished my year at IU, I got a job at the University of Texas. Joel Sherzer was the chair at that time, and became a generous and inspiring mentor, along with visionary Steven Feld.

I did not study with Bauman, but when he retired I was on the shortlist for a job at IU. I did not get it, but he was there in the audience, attending to my new work on sound and listening.

I did not study with Bauman, but in fact he, and all the other scholars in *Verbal Art as Performance* were my guiding mentors, my north star through the world of academia.

Verbal Art as Performance is a book about genres. And as folklore theory teaches, genres leak. They are porous. Their limits call out for breach. As do the disciplines of Anthropology, Folklore, Linguistics, Literary Criticism, Performance Studies, Poetics. Richard Bauman has made abiding contributions to all these categories, transcending them all. I can only hope to do the same.

Postlude: intellectual genealogies

It turns out that Dick Bauman and I had a common mentor: Américo Paredes, the author, activist and scholar who documented the rich folklore of the Texas-Mexican border, and Professor of Folklore at the University of Texas at Austin.

I did not know Américo well. When I was the director of the Center for Intercultural Studies in Folklore and Ethnomusicology at the University of Texas he had already retired, but he came once a week to sit with the office administrator, his friend Frances Terry. I always greeted him and we exchanged a few words. He even invited me home to meet his wife. But Américo and I did not have a history like he had with Frances. Or like he had had with Dick Bauman when they both were at UT.

And yet, soon after Américo died in 1999, I had a striking dream. I heard Américo's voice. "Write for the masses," he told me. It was a short sentence, an imperative. His voice was so loud and clear that I woke up stunned and was unable to fall back to sleep.

The next day there was a memorial service at the university. Dick was present. Did I introduce him? I don't remember, but I knew that day that we had a common lineage. We were tied by a love of poetics, of beauty in the vernacular, and a desire to translate that for the world.

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Kenneth White, "A Shaman Dancing on the Glacier"

Ullrich Kockel

According to folk wisdom, retrospective straightens life's meandering paths into self-evident progress. By that logic, I am precisely where I was always meant to be at this stage in my life and can clearly discern by which route I so inevitably got here. One of the milestones along that path was an innocuous essay by Kenneth White that I was only able to read years after finding it referenced in another text (McIntosh 2001). And yet, White's essay is like a lens through which the light-bundle of my various intellectual (and other) trajectories passes into focus. As such it remains a reference point as I ramble and roam the *topoi* linked by my wandering.

Kenneth White held the Chair of Twentieth-Century Poetics at the Sorbonne when he wrote this meditation as a lecture for the symposium *Burns, Beuys and Beyond—The Figure of the Artist in (Modern) Society* at the Goethe-Institut Glasgow in 1990. He later included it, slightly edited, in a programmatic selection of essays on Scotland (White 1998: 35–48), designed to initiate his reconnection with his "native place" that he "always considered … neither as nation nor as region, but as microcosm" (viii). This perspective links him to the Scottish Renaissance's internationalist strand with its cosmo-visionary parochialism that has been inspiring a "creative (Scottish) ethnology" (Kockel and McFadyen 2019) for some time.

The meditation has three substantive parts. In the first (White 1998: 35–37), the author reflects on his childhood experience of growing up in the rural west of Scotland, which he reads, through the lens of his later study of Mircea Eliade's work, as infused with shamanic elements and practices. He then recounts (37–43)

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examples of these from different contexts, emphasizing that by cross-cultural, comparative study "we will not be losing roots and identity, we will be extending them, recovering scope and energies, able to apply them within any specific socio-cultural context" (42). From this vantage point he envisages an expansion and fusion of "depth ecology, lightening philosophy, live poetics and, who knows, even enlightened cultural politics" (42), which leads him in the third part, perhaps not surprisingly, to Joseph Beuys with his "expanded concept of art", whose work White first encountered in Basel's Modern Art Museum. As he narrates this encounter, his was uncannily similar to mine, when I was (awe-)struck by the comprehensive ethnographic quality of Beuys' *Irish Energies*—two Irish peat briquettes glued together with butter: "here was someone who had a grasp of the matter, the whole matter" (43). White goes on to characterize Beuys as a shaman and recounts the artist's visit to Scotland in the 1970s, where Rannoch Moor, site of the last glacier in Scotland, inspired Beuys to his work "Celtic (Kinloch Rannoch) Scottish Symphony." Drawing again on global examples, White argues that the retreat of the ice sheet was the context for the emergence of shamanic vision—which he sees embodied in the work of Beuys—and proposes the recovery of "an earth-sense, a ground sense, and a freshness of the world", to herald "the dawn of geopoetics" (48).

Although conscious of this essay since I read Alastair McIntosh's book in 2004, it took me several years and relocation to Scotland to track down the out-of-print text and read it. By that time, I was already aware of White as a poet and essayist, having bought (but not yet read) some of his later books because they looked interesting. McIntosh refers to White quite a bit in the context of a community land buy-out, which connects to my research interest in endogenous development. What intrigued me most at that time was, however, that White's essay connected with Beuys, on whose mythos I had written for the Tate Gallery (Kockel 1995), and on whose ventures into Irish-Scottish mythology I had supervised a PhD project (Walters 2012). Reading more of White's work, I came across his postulate of a "new anthropology" (White 2004: 22), which resonates with my own ideas about ethnology, summarized for a lecture at Innsbruck University (Kockel 2009). The kernels of White's postulate are already there in the second part of his earlier essay—which I would not read for another few years. When I finally did, his thinking became clearer for me, to a point where I began better to understand his concept of "geopoetics."

While neither "geopoetics" nor White's related concept of the "intellectual nomad" are new (one may think of Rimbaud, who features prominently in White's writing, or Whitman, who appears too), White elevates "geopoetics" beyond ecocritical literature, to something resembling a redemptive anthropology for the Anthropocene—without using these terms. White (1998) does not intend the emphasis on the archaic, shamanic that runs through most of the essays in the book to be taken literally, but metaphorically: not a call for a return to (archaic) roots, but a forward vision, reminiscent of Ernst Bloch's utopian *Heimat*, of rooting in a world

yet to be made—*geo-poesis*—through deep engagement with place and the cosmos it refracts. Thus, his essays in *On Scottish Ground*, much like the work of Irish poet Patrick Kavanagh (Kockel and McFadyen 2019), highlight grounded-ness in a Local seen as a de-colonial microcosm or, to use a metaphor from theoretical physics, a hologram of the world.

Growing up in late twentieth-century Germany, it was difficult for a younger me to perceive of grounded-ness other than in terms of either "blood and soil," or being shackled and isolated. At the same time, a youthful commitment to autonomy and self-determination drove an interest in endogenous local/regional development that led me to writers from Peter Kropotkin to Doreen Massey, Hazel Henderson, Patrick Geddes with his famous dictum "think global, act local," and onwards to Arne Naess' "deep ecology." The polymath Geddes in particular inspired a different perspective on grounded-ness and the Local, which led me to pick up Alastair McIntosh's *Soil and Soul* some twenty years ago.

It only strikes me now, as I am writing this, that both McIntosh and White begin their text with autobiographical reflections, which are similar in perspective and implication. Both authors talk about their early, deep connections with places where they grew up in the West of Scotland. White (1998: 36) refers to a place "up the back" and talks about it in a way that reminds me of the forest with which I communed at about the same age, gathering meaningful items—in my case, jay feathers, acorns, colorful stones, or sherds of glass—and hiding them in a secret abode. Most children, if allowed, would have experiences like this growing up, although not all would necessarily share the sense of blissful solitude that comes across in White's description of what was also my favorite pastime: "A lot of the time was spent in just standing and staring, or in a meditative kind of wandering" (36). At the time, whenever an adult asked me what I was up to, I replied with an air of profundity difficult to render in English: "*Ich lasse wirken*." This usually shut them up, probably because they had long lost that ability to connect—as did I for a time, if never entirely.

Having left home for the big city, we both found ourselves "wandering around the streets and backstreets … and writing bits and pieces … random explorations of … places, encounters, conversations … dreams and memories" (35). White's Paris in the mid-1950s was my Hamburg in the late 1970s, when I wandered around responding to Heidegger's *Being and Time* on my (in those days quite analogue) notepad, or intensely discussing Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* with a total stranger. Perhaps at that age we are all "intellectual nomads," moving both metaphorically and physically through the world we thus create for ourselves. But this world should not morph into a bubble that contains us, contently inward-looking at our intellectual navels. Like Joseph Knecht in Hesse's *Glass Bead Game*, we need to strike a balance between the *vita contemplativa* and the *vita activa*: We should return from our desks to the forest, the coast, the islands, Rannoch Moor—and from there to fields, factories and workshops, towns, cities, and urban wastelands—the whole Geddesian "Valley Section." What White sees as "intellectual nomadism," a chief

methodology of "geopoetics," is, in a way, the synthesis of both *vitae* Joseph Knecht strives for and dies achieving—a revolt against the strictures of canonical academia, resolving an Appolonian/Dionysian binary distorting our world and constraining our livelihoods, and in its place seeking out the confluences of the Carrying Stream (Henderson; see Kockel and McFadyen 2019). Which brings us back to Scotland.

At the confluences of the Carrying Stream, the aforementioned Scottish Renaissance, with its ethnological preoccupations and recent turn towards "lithic agency," encounters undisciplined wanderers—among them Hamish Henderson, scoping living tradition in its intercultural contexts, and postulating that "poetry becomes people;" Joseph Beuys, declaring "everyone is an artist," and creating "social sculpture;" Nan Shepherd, leading us into the cosmo-parochial microcosm of her "living mountain" (Kockel and McFadyen 2019); or, more recently, Mandy Haggith, creatively re-imagining the descendants of White's (1998: 48) "Finn-men"—companions of the mythical Gaelic hero Finn McCool (Fionn mac Cumhaill)—roaming a post-glacial Scotland. Although White singles out Beuys as the shaman, his "dawn of geopoetics" is breaking between these inter-related perspectives, gathering them into turbulence and cascading them forth—like a gorge the Carrying Stream tumbles through from its lake source and catchment towards the coastal plain and onwards, via the delta to the sea.

The play with lithic imagery here, as in White's essay, is self-consciously intentional, a reference to the "grounding" White advocates. White's own grounding is intellectually eclectic (to say the least) and geographically global, leading some critics to regard it as rejecting the Local and privileging a conservative cosmology. Such a reading is quite possible; as a fuller refutation is beyond the scope of this essay, suffice it to say that I have found it refreshingly insightful to re-read some of that cosmology through White's perspective, which opens up progressive vistas on such thorny perennials of debate as place and human relationships with it.

The trajectory that has led me inevitably to Scotland, both physically and metaphysically, has been interlaced with Scottish encounters along the way—the "uncanny Scot of Königsberg" (Durant 2006: 329) with his relational ethic among them. Through reading White, my physical journey connects with a metaphysical one. Looking back from that gorge, I see the contributories more clearly: Continental and analytical philosophy; deep and shallow ecology; Geddes, Bloch, Heidegger, Wittgenstein. Gazing ahead, I can make out the delta and the firth, mountain-hemmed sea lochs, scattered islands, and the open sea beyond—mapping out a radical, geopoetic human ecology that gives rise to a creative ethnology with its cosmo-visionary grounded-ness in global relationships. White (1998: 3) noted that the term "radical" implies that "you're talking about roots …, but there's no sense of talking about roots (all you'll get is a lot of ethnofantasia and identity ideology), unless you talk about ground"—a point he develops in some detail throughout the book. The fundamental shift in perspective indicated here, from an individual imaginary of political community towards the historico-ecological and critically anthropological, liberates the ethnological imagination to think place

relationships—other than as either a populist route into some sort of fascism or a psychoanalytically diagnosed emotional condition—in all the grounded complexity they comprise and unfold.

White's perspective offers a way of pulling together many strands of my own thinking—from intellectual exploration to focused inquiry – which reassures me in moving ahead, opening up vistas and gateways. Particularly important has been his anthropo-philosophical prefiguring of a grounded-ness that can be liberating rather than incarcerating, what White calls "Open World"—a cosmo-visionary Local differing radically from the ideologically confined, incarcerated version we are all too used to.

White included the essay on Beuys in his programmatic collection *On Scottish Ground,* where he set out his vision of "grounding" with reference to a globally embedded Scotland. Since discovering that essay, I have occasionally gone back to it, and other of White's texts, to refocus my own perspective. Not that White explains things all that well—rather, he often obscures them; but grappling with his writing has helped me better to understand the writing of others, and how it might relate to my own world-making. Thus, I no longer feel that I am, as I used to say with full conviction, from *nowhere* in particular, but am *now here*, in particular: building my *Heimat* by dwelling *On Scottish Ground*, where that *here* of my place encompasses the multiple *theres* that I have traversed thinking—and some I have not even been to yet. As White (1998: 225) says quite rightly: "Simple location is a thing of the past."

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Ghanaram, *Dharmamaṅgal*

Frank J. Korom

Growing up in an immigrant household in the United States where nobody read or spoke English very well, we didn't have much to read in the house. Luckily, my mother would bring home books every now and then that were being thrown away by the people who owned the houses she used to clean. One day, when I was eight or nine years old, to my surprise, she brought home a wonderfully illustrated children's edition of *The Song of Roland* (Fr. *La Chanson de Roland*), the eleventh-century epic poem (*chanson de geste*) based on the Battle of Roncevaux Pass in 778 CE. Being the oldest surviving major work of French literature, it opened up a lost age for me, and it would become the spark that would ignite my longstanding interest in epics.

I wasn't a good student back then in Catholic grade school, but years later, after having voraciously consumed Homer's epics, Beowolf, and many others, I fell in love with India and its culture, which led me to the two Sanskrit epics, one of which was the *Mahābhārata*. In fact, I carried a dog-eared version of it around with me in my backpack during my first fifteen-month odyssey to South Asia when I went overland from Germany to Nepal and back again in the mid-seventies. One line in the first book (*ādiparvan*) of the epic stuck with me, which I paraphrase here from 1.56.33: "Everything [in the *Mahābhārata*] is elsewhere. What is not there is nowhere" (*yadihāsti tadanyatra yannehāsti na tatkvacit*). The noted Indologist J.A.B. Van Buitenen (1973: 130) translates it more literally as: "… whatever is here, ... that is found elsewhere. But what is not here is nowhere else." This lovely little piece of what Alan Dundes once termed metafolkore—folklore about folklore—sparked my curiosity. Do epics really contain everything? Are they world histories disguised as

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literature or "myth" in the ill-conceived western sense of falsehood? I would later delve into the academic literature on both written and oral epics as an eager graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania who wished to revive folklore studies in India and elsewhere in South Asia.

Penn was touted as being the best place in the world (or at least in North America) to study Folklore and Folklife at that time, but it also had a renowned South Asian Regional Studies department, which for me was the best of both worlds, so to speak, that allowed me to study folklore and specialize in a geographical area that had enchanted me since high school, when I got interested in both Indian music and spirituality, thanks to The Beatles (especially George Harrison). It was an interest in music and mysticism that first compelled me to make the long and sometimes-arduous journey overland from rural Pennsylvania in the USA to Munich to Kathmandu and back again along the beleaguered "magic bus trail" that was popularized by The Who in the 1979 rockumentary film titled *The Kids Are Alright*, which in reality ran overland back and forth from London to Kathmandu in the sixties and seventies, until the Iranian Revolution in 1978–79 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, also in 1978, more or less put an end to it by the eighties, the latter of which I experienced personally. There are quite a few books written about the so-called "hippie trail" and the magic bus route, but McLean (2009) tells it best.

In any case, when I arrived at Penn in 1985 directly from Pakistan, I had switched from the study of Urdu and Hindi to Bengali, which eventually took me to eastern India, where a genre of Middle Bengali literature exists known as *Maṅgalkāvya*. *Maṅgalkāvya*, literally "auspicious poem," is a literary genre of praise poems that most certainly existed as shorter lays in the oral tradition before being committed to pen and paper by literate composers patronized by regional *rājā*s (kings). These long texts praised local Bengali deities, such as goddesses named Chandi and Manasha, but also a curious male deity known as Dharmaraj ("king of duty") or simply Dharma ("duty") for short, the grand lord who ruled over the entire cosmology (Korom 2020a). His story—told in a sub-genre of *Maṅgalkāvya*—is known as *Dharmamaṅgal*, the "auspicious dharma." Various recensions of the text exist, mostly written by high-caste writers, but a Brahmin poet named Ghanaram (b. 1669 CE) composed the longest and most poetic version of the epic narrative, for which he received the title *kavikaṅkan*, the "jewel of poets" (see Korom 2020b: 304).

Like the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, Ghanaram's text is a rambling one that is almost 1,000 pages long, with stories emboxed in yet other stories. But the difference between the two is that the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* had national, pan-Indian appeal, whereas the *Dharmamaṅgal* had vernacular resonances, evoking the topography of Bengal in flowery poetic prose. Indeed, the text focuses exclusively on the area known in medieval Bengal as Rarh, which is the core region of the province that is comprised of three contiguous districts where Dharmaraj worship is still practiced exuberantly today. It is a panegyric text that predestines the hero Lausen to be born

in the human realm and go through a variety of trials and tribulations before he can establish the widespread worship of Dharmaraj on earth. He and his dimwit brother, Karpur ("camphor"), must thus stave off first humiliation at the hands of a prostitute during a riddling context, then through various battles with a host of monstrous animals, not to mention bloody human wars in which scores and scores of people perish only to be revivified in the end by the deity who shows mercy to his devotees after Lausen makes the sun rise in the west by hacking up his body into pieces as a sacrificial offering to his chosen god, Dharma.

To conclude, I thought it would be a useful exercise to provide the first ever translation of a description of the hero Lausen's horse, since one of the things that attracted me to Roland's epic as a child was the color print of him in full regalia riding upon his own trusty steed. I was later to learn from Cecil Bowra that descriptions of heroes' horses are central to epics around the world, since they are part of the "mechanics" of epic narrative to add "persuasiveness" and a "realistic" appeal to the storyteller's art (Bowra 1952: 179–214). As he writes, "No animal invites so technical or so discriminating a knowledge or excites stronger affection and admiration. Heroic poets know about horses and study them with professional appreciation" (173). Let me therefore end this brief confession by providing the context for the concluding description of Lausen's mount, beautifully scored by Ghanaram in the verses below.

After slaying a madly intoxicated elephant that was destroying the kingdom of his maternal uncle and arch enemy, Patra, and then restoring it to life, the little king reluctantly announces that he will reward Lausen for this noble deed by granting him a horse, even though "shamed … like a leech with lime in its mouth" (Mahāpātra 1962: 340). Little did the scheming king know that the horse he was about to gift the hero was divinely ordained by the super simian Hanuman (= Hanu), the messenger of the Creator in the *Dharmamaṅgal* and ultimate devotee of Ram, one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu, to whom our featured poet is devoted! The following is my translation of a description taken from the *hastībadh pālā* ("elephant-slaying chapter") of Ghanaram's text, which is written in couplet (*paẏār*) form:

The king said, "Son, if you are agreeable,
Then examine carefully and pick out a beautiful horse."
Hailing the order, the two brothers went into the stable.
The jewel among the poets composes an interesting song.
Meditating on the preceptor's feet, they went to the stable.
At this time, the mighty Hanu became favorable.
Being kind, he gave advice to the devotee [saying],
"The strong, variegated [steed] is there in disguise.
[It is] he who was the heavenly horse pulling the Sun's chariot,
[and] for your sake he was reborn in India.
Oh Lord, look at the last of the seven horses in the stable,

Which is chewing bad fodder carelessly facing the northeast.
Seeing you, the horse will start neighing."
So saying, [Hanuman] disappeared.
In joy, the Lord ran at Hanu's command,
Carefully gazing around the stable one by one.
He found many fresh mares and steeds.
Some were mountain ponies, some were Persian, of beautiful color.
Some were yellow, some tawny, some were blue in color.
He noticed various types of horses, black and white,
But no horse captivated his mind.
He entered where the variegated male one [was].
The horse started neighing, looking at the Lord's face.
Sen remarked, "Oh gosh, it's from Iraq (*erāki*)"!
The horse's color is incomparable, like that of the waters of the Ganges.
Its four restless feet tawny,
Its belly white, back blue, [with] a tail of beautiful color.
Karpur said, "Oh brother, this is that horse!
This [is] the mark, just as was prophesied by the valiant one!"
They bound the horse, circumambulating him many times.
"If you are pleased, I shall take you home."
The horse with a pleasant face said,
"Lord, you are the Creator's son.
You have received me by writ of the hero [Hanu].
Having drawn the Sun's chariot, I remember [all past] lives.
I exist now as a mad horse.
I came and went regularly, encircling [Mount] Sumeru,
But for your sake the Lord of the World caused me to be born on earth.
Yet while I gallop, [my] hoofs do not touch the ground
Now it comes to mind [just] how far heaven [really] is."
(Mahāpātra 1962: 341–42)

The two brothers then take their chosen horse into the king's assembly, where the crowd looks on in astonishment, yelling that they chose the crazy one and begging them to choose another. But only the "most sinful" uncle was pleased with their choice. After some wrangling, the brothers take possession of the horse, which is in need of a good bath.

By scrubbing the horse's body they removed the dirt,
[Then] braided a lovely plait on the horses neck,
With golden, silken threads woven into it.
The saddle, colored with jewels, shined on [its] back.
Emeralds, silver, gold, diamonds, and rubies,
[So many] colorful jewels sparkled on the saddle of the horse!

Resounding bells on beautiful anklets,
Jingled in accompaniment to its trot.
With golden ornaments on its forehead and a wonderful plume,
[And] tight, brilliant ropes and reigns adorning its muzzle.
Silver stirrups hung from its torso.
[Its] mouth was fastened with a lovely rein.
[The] entire body was covered with gold embroidered cloth.
Having [thus] dressed up the horse, the stable hands brought it out.
On its body were beautiful cloths, fringes tied to its head.
[And] as one pulled on the rein cord, its tail wagged.
(Mahāpātra 1962: 343-44)

Having tamed the wild steed, Lausen then, like a gymnast, mounted it dramatically and galloped around the town, much to the chagrin of the evil Patra. The text continues for another 700 pages or so, before the penultimate battle and Lausen's final sacrifice for his deity Dharma, who then appears and resuscitates everyone that has been killed in the preceding carnage. But that story will have to wait for another day.

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Antje Vollmer, *Doppelleben. Heinrich und Gottliebe von Lehndorff im Widerstand gegen Hitler und von Ribbentrop*

Margret Kraul

Die Sommermonate verbringe ich seit Jahren in Masuren. Die leicht hügelige Landschaft mit ihren vielen Seen, ihrem Licht, ihren verschiedenen Himmelsfarben übt einen großen Reiz auf mich aus. Und auch die vielen alten Herrenhäuser, von denen teilweise nur noch Rudimente zu finden sind, gehören in mein Bild des Sommers, allen voran Schloss Steinort, am Labap-See, gegenüber einer großen Marina gelegen. Einer meiner ersten Wege im Sommer, häufig auch mit Gästen führt mich immer wieder dorthin. Vor dem etwas erhöht liegenden Schloss mit seinem Mittelteil aus dem Barock und seinen zwei angebauten Flügeln und Türmen aus dem 19. Jahrhundert stehen auf einem rondellartigen Rasenstück einige Hinweisschilder auf die Geschichte des Schlosses, und nicht weit vom Schloss entfernt, in den dichten Wäldern, finden sich Bunkerreste, betonierte Zeugen der Kriegsgräuel: im Mauerwald die Überreste des Oberkommandos des Heeres und vor allem, nur 14 km entfernt, die Wolfsschanze, Hitlers Hauptquartier während des Russlandfeldzuges. Es sind erschreckende Kriegszeugnisse, die in ihrer Materialität die Martialität des Krieges belegen. Geradezu unbedeutend nimmt sich dagegen der Findling aus, links vor dem Schloss, mit dem auf einer Grabplatte aus blankem schwarzen Granit anlässlich des 100. Geburtstages des früheren Besitzers von Steinort gedacht wird, des Widerstandskämpfers Heinrich Graf Lehndorff, der nach dem gescheiterten Attentat auf Hitler, am 20. Juli 1944 in der Wolfsschanze, im September in Plötzensee hingerichtet wurde.

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Die so unterschiedlichen baulichen Monumente, die Bunkerreste aus dickem Beton und das alte Schloss mit seinem bröckelnden Putz und seinen undichten Dächern, der Gedenkstein an der Seite, all das hatte ich bereits wahrgenommen, ohne es in einen größeren mit Anschauung gefüllten Kontext stellen zu können, als ich vor gut zehn Jahren Antje Vollmers Buch *Doppelleben. Heinrich und Gottliebe von Lehndorff im Widerstand gegen Hitler und von Ribbentrop* erhielt, auf den ersten Blick eine Zusammenstellung aus Dokumenten und verbindenden Erzählsträngen. Vollmer macht sich auf den Weg, Spuren und Zeugnisse des Widerstandskämpfers Heinrich von Lehndorff zu finden, und sein Leben, in Verbindung mit den ihn umgebenden Personen, mit der Landschaft und mit den politischen Gegebenheiten, vor allem dem Widerstand gegen Hitler, darzustellen. Aus vielen Puzzlesteinchen – angefangen mit Lehndorffs Abituraufsatz und seinen Beurteilungen durch Lehrer an der Internatsschule Roßleben, wo er Abitur macht und aus deren Schülerschaft eine Reihe späterer Widerstandskämpfer hervorgehen sollten, über Briefe, Interviews, Familienskizzen und -geschichten, Erinnerungen von Freunden und Verwandten, Kaufverträge bis hin zu Fahndungsschreiben der Gestapo, die helfen sollten, Lehndorff nach seiner Flucht aufzuspüren – zeichnet sie meisterhaft ein Bild der Zeit, in der Heinrich und Gottliebe von Lehndorff gelebt haben, und versucht mit Hilfe späterer Interviews mit Gottliebe, nicht nur das Leben, sondern auch das damalige Erleben der handelnden Personen zu rekonstruieren.

Hat mich in diesem Bereich Vollmers Art der Biographieforschung beeindruckt, so geht der Gewinn der Lektüre doch deutlich darüber hinaus, denn das Buch ist weitaus facettenreicher: In meinem Bewusstsein war der Widerstand gegen Hitler bisher auf den 20. Juli beschränkt, allenfalls war mir noch das Attentat im Münchener Bürgerbräukeller durch Georg Elser (8. November 1939) im Gedächtnis; Antje Vollmer jedoch listet, basierend auf einschlägiger geschichtswissenschaftlicher Fachliteratur, eine ganz Fülle von Attentatsversuchen gegen Hitler auf. Und in dem von ihr gesetzten Kontext „Steinort“ gibt sie den Verschwörern ein Gesicht, rollt deren Lebensgeschichten auf und verdeutlicht ihre Motive, zugleich ihre Skrupel und ihre – vergeblichen – Versuche, mit dem Ausland für ein Deutschland nach einem geglückten Attentat eine handlungsfähige Regierung vorzubereiten, damit das Land nicht im Chaos versinken solle. Die Attentatsversuche werden eingebunden in das Umfeld der einzelnen Verschwörergruppen dargestellt, wobei Vollmer ihr Hauptaugenmerk auf die Gruppe um Henning von Tresckow und Claus Schenk Graf Stauffenberg richtet, jene Gruppe, der auch Heinrich von Lehndorff angehörte. Die Mitglieder der Gruppe, teilweise hohe Militärs aus alten Adelsfamilien, waren, wie Vollmer verdeutlicht, keineswegs alle von Anfang an Gegner des nationalsozialistischen Regimes, vielmehr sind es ihre Beobachtungen und Erlebnisse während der Nazizeit, die sie zu der Überzeugung kommen lassen, dass diesem Regime ein Ende gesetzt werden muss.

Einen besonderen Fokus legt Vollmer auf die Lebensgeschichten von Heinrich Lehndorff und seiner Frau Gottliebe. Für beide Protagonist:innen ihres Buchs taucht sie tief in deren Familiengeschichten ein, beginnend bei den Pruzzen und

dem Deutschen Ritterorden. Es sind die Geschichten der großen Adelsfamilien Ostpreußens. In Lehndorffs Fall geht es von der Verleihung der „Großen Wildnis am See“, dem späteren Steinort, an die Familie „Leggendorf“ über den Eintritt seiner Vorfahren in die europäische Politik, ihre militärischen und diplomatischen Missionen, bis hin zur Baugeschichte von Steinort. Vollmer malt ein Tableau der Vergangenheit und der Traditionen, in die der spätere Besitzer von Steinort durch seine Geburt hineingestellt wird und die ihn prägen. Vermutlich der guten Quellenlage geschuldet, vielleicht aber auch seines sehr ausgeprägten und etwas skurrilen Charakters wegen verharrt sie dann mit ihrer Darstellung bei Heinrich Lehndorffs unmittelbarem Erblasser, dem „legendäre[n] ‚Onkel Carol‘“ (35), der kinderlos starb, und zitiert über viele Seiten das Porträt, das Hans Lehndorff, ein Vetter von Heinrich, dem gemeinsamen Onkel widmet und das, eingebettet in anschauliche Beschreibungen des Schlosses, in amüsanter und kurzweiliger Weise Carols Schrulligkeiten und Manieriertheiten vor den Leser:innen entstehen lässt, das Ganze nicht ganz frei von einer fast verklärend freundlichen Darstellung der guten alten Zeit.

Gegen diese schillernde extravagante Figur nimmt sich Heinrich Graf Lehndorffs Elternhaus in Preyl, in der Nähe von Königsberg, trotz der alles bestimmenden Pferdeleidenschaft seines Vaters geradezu nüchtern, funktional und bodenständig aus. Es scheint bei allem Konservatismus bezüglich der Etikette ein recht großzügiges, auch weltoffenes Elternhaus gewesen zu sein – Manfred Lehndorff votiert als einer der wenigen ostelbischen Gutsbesitzer für den Erhalt der Weimarer Republik. Hier verlebt sein Sohn Heinrich im Kreise seiner Geschwister und Vettern und Kusinen, u.a. Marion Dönhoff, eine glückliche Kindheit mit viel Freiheit, strukturiert im Wesentlichen durch die Pferde und die Verantwortung für sie. Die üblichen Internats- und Pensionatsaufenthalte beenden diese in Erinnerungen nahezu unbeschwert erscheinende Kindheit und Jugend. Anfang der dreißiger Jahre treffen sich die Mitglieder der alten Jugendclique wieder, jetzt in Frankfurt am Main, im Umfeld einer liberalen und inspirierenden Universität. Aber diese Phase hält nicht lange an; schon 1934 gehen sie alle getrennte Wege: Heinrich Lehndorff nach Ostpreußen, wo er 1936 Gut Steinort übernimmt.

Parallel zu Heinrich Graf Lehndorffs Geschichte greift Antje Vollmer auch die seiner späteren Ehefrau, Gottliebe Gräfin Kalnein, auf; auch sie aus einem alten Adelsgeschlecht, das sich auf die Pruzzen zurückführt, auch ihre Kindheit und Jugend geprägt von Pferden – ihr Vater war Landstallmeister in Celle und später in Graditz, aber offensichtlich durch die Scheidung der Eltern eine weniger glückliche Kindheit. Gottliebe darf jedoch mit siebzehn Jahren in Pension nach Dresden und in ein Mädchengymnasium gehen, ist dabei sich zu emanzipieren und verliebt sich in einen „Halbjuden“, was dazu führt, dass sie von ihrer inzwischen mit ihrem zweiten Mann in Kolumbien lebenden Mutter dorthin beordert wird. Als sie 1934, einundzwanzigjährig, nach Deutschland zurückkehrt, lebt sie in Berlin, genießt das Berliner Großstadtleben, ein wenig Jeunesse dorée. Auf einer Fahrt nach

Ostpreußen lernt sie Heinrich Lehndorff kennen, die Grundlage für ihr gemeinsames Leben wird gelegt.

Und damit beginnt eines der spannendsten Kapitel des Buches: das Leben von Heinrich und Gottliebe von Lehndorff in Steinort. Hier führt Vollmer nun das zusammen, was sie zuvor mit vielen Dokumenten angelegt hat: Die handelnden Personen, bestimmt von ihren familiären Traditionen, aber wohl auch von einem gewissen Freiheitsstreben, und mit gutem Verantwortungsgefühl ausgestattet, werden eingebunden in ihre Aufgaben auf Schloss Steinort, inmitten der masurischen Landschaft mit ihren vielen Seen, ihren Wäldern und ihrer Weite. Es sind wunderschöne Bilder, die Vollmer da malt, irritiert jedoch durch die Zeitläufte: zunächst Lehndorffs etwas unerklärlicher Parteieintritt (1937), dann aber, ungleich entscheidender, der Beginn des Zweiten Weltkriegs und die Einziehung Lehndorffs zur Wehrmacht, als Ordonnanzoffizier bei Generalfeldmarschall von Bock. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt nähert er sich vermutlich, wohl durch seinen schon früh gefallenen oppositionellen Bruder beeinflusst, innerlich bereits dem Widerstand an, eine Entscheidung, die dann wohl endgültig wird, nachdem er Zeuge des Massakers von Borrissow (1941) war.

Damit hatte das Kriegsgeschehen seinen Lauf auch über Steinort genommen. Und es sollte dort sinnfälliger und greifbarer werden als in irgendeinem anderen der ostpreußischen Herrenhäuser. So hatte Ribbentrop, Außenminister des NS-Staates, beschlossen, sein Quartier nicht im Führerhauptquartier in der nahen Wolfsschanze zu nehmen, sondern „standesgemäßer“ in einem der Schlösser zu residieren, und requirierte für sich und seine Entourage kurzerhand den linken Flügel von Schloss Steinort. Das Doppelleben, das sich damit im Schloss abspielte, sah SS und Gestapo im linken Flügel, Heinrich von Lehndorff, der für die Verbindung zwischen einzelnen Mitgliedern des Widerstands zuständig war und immer wieder Kontaktpersonen des Widerstands um sich scharte, mit seiner Familie im rechten, dem Ostflügel. Vertrauliche Gespräche mussten bei Spaziergängen oder Ausritten geführt werden. Gekocht wurde für alle gemeinsam auf einem Riesenherd im Erdgeschoss des Schlosses – hier hatte Ribbentrop ihm gemäße Einbauten vornehmen lassen; und gelegentlich lud sich Ribbentrop, für den Vollmer ebenso wie für die anderen Akteur:innen eine Art Psychogramm erstellt, bei den Lehndorffs zum Essen ein oder beschenkte großzügig die Lehndorff-Kinder.

Dass eine solche Konstellation im Schloss zwischen Widerstand und Gestapo-Präsenz ein immenses Spannungspotential in sich barg, steht außer Frage. Vollmer gelingt es, diese explosive Spannung mit Hilfe von Photographien, späteren Interviews mit Zeitzeug:innen sowie Akten aus den Volksgerichtsprozessen nachvollziehbar zu machen, die handelnden Personen des Lehndorff-Flügels, ihre Motive und, soweit überliefert, ihre Wahrnehmung der Zeit einzufangen und in Kontrast dazu die fortschreitende Kriegsmaschinerie des NS-Staates und das in Beton gegossene Leben in der Wolfsschanze zu setzen. Eine Verbindung zwischen diesen beiden Bereichen wird über die minutiöse Nachzeichnung des sich formierenden Widerstands um Henning von Tresckow hergestellt. Das Ganze

gipfelt in der Beschreibung des Attentats, der stundenlangen Ungewissheit über dessen Ausgang, die beiden Fluchtversuche Heinrich von Lehndorffs, seine Gefangennahme und Verurteilung, an deren Ende sein langer, zutiefst berührender Abschiedsbrief an seine Frau steht. Ein paar Rückblenden und eine kleine kunstgeschichtliche Einordnung Steinorts beschließen den Band.

Was mich beim anfänglichen Lesen des Buches immer wieder irritiert hat, das ist der Wechsel zwischen den Schreibstilen: auf der einen Seite das Bestreben, aus weit gefächerten biographischen Quellen die handelnden Personen lebendig werden zu lassen – ein Unterfangen, das Vollmer vorzüglich gelingt –, und auf der anderen Seite die der Geschichtswissenschaft entnommenen Fakten zum Zweiten Weltkrieg, die zwar Heinrich von Lehndorff in einen weiteren Zusammenhang stellen, gelegentlich aber auch Überhand gewinnen und von Steinort weg in die Kriegs- und Militärgeschichte führen. Bei meiner jetzigen nochmaligen Lektüre erscheint es mir allerdings, als sei diese Uneinheitlichkeit durchaus als probates Mittel zu verstehen, um den immensen Bruch zwischen einem ursprünglich auf eine gelingende Biographie zielenden Aufwachsen mit vielen schönen Lebensplänen und den massiven politischen Einbrüchen darzustellen; die Schreibstile als Ausweis dessen, wie alle Freiheit und Privatheit von der NS-Politik geradezu erdrückt wird.

Was mich dagegen an dem Buch von Anfang an fasziniert hat und das noch immer tut, ist die Einbindung in die Landschaft Masurens; es ist der beschriebene Weg nach Schloss Steinort, den ich schon so oft gefahren bin, vorbei an Seen, die durch den Wald glitzern, über eine Brücke, die zu beiden Seiten nur Wasser und Weite erkennen lässt, durch dichten Wald, der in eine Eichenallee übergeht, bis in das kleine Dorf Sztynort. Es ist aber auch die Verlebendigung der einstigen Bewohner:innen des Schlosses; sie stehen mir durch die Lektüre fast ebenso präsent vor Augen wie ihre Nachfahren, die im Sommer häufig dort sind. Und so sind es dann verschiedene Gründe, die das Buch für mich zu einer entscheidenden Lektüre machen: weniger die literarische Ebene, vielmehr die biographischen Darstellungen der Akteur:innen und jener jungen Adligengeneration in der Weimarer Republik sowie die mir bis dahin unbekannten Fakten des Widerstands. Vor allem aber ist es der Schauplatz der Darstellung, an dem ich mich jedes Jahr ein paar Monate aufhalte und mittlerweile zu Hause fühle.

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Helen Oyeyemi, *Mr. Fox*

Kimberly J. Lau

Helen Oyeyemi's 2011 novel, *Mr. Fox*, is a rich and enthralling marvel. On the surface, a series of interlaced adaptations of Bluebeard, Fitcher's Bird, Mr. Fox, and the ballad of Reynardine; beneath the surface, a teeming and provocative wonderland that opens those adaptations and their intertexts to the workings of gender and race, romance and desire, imperialism and geopolitics. The novel begins with a challenge: Mary Foxe, a muse conjured by the writer St. John Fox, appears after an extended absence, clearly no longer content to comply with the terms of his imagination. Boldly defiant, she returns to inspire not literary genius but a contest of narrative wills, a struggle for control of St. John's stories. At stake is his authorial identity, one Mary hopes to transform from villainous "serial killer," based on his pattern of killing off his female characters in gruesome and violent acts perpetrated by his purportedly sympathetic male characters, to more conscientious and thoughtful writer, more conscientious and thoughtful man (4).

The precise terms of the challenge are never made clear to St. John, nor to the reader, but he consents to the game nonetheless, albeit with some trepidation, and that game structures the remainder of the novel as Mary and St. John narrate and renarrate, negotiate and renegotiate their own and each other's stories. Formally experimental, *Mr. Fox* is at times focalized through St. John, at times through Mary, and on occasion through St. John's wife, Daphne. While such fluctuations in perspective are not in themselves necessarily experimental, they become so in *Mr. Fox* as the focalizations shift and slip in intentionally and productively ambiguous ways. So, too, the narrative voice. And the genders. As such, it is often unclear who is narrating any given story, whether told in the first person or the third person, and

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in several cases one character might hijack another character's narrative mid-story, breaking through the story's immediate boundaries to return to the novel's frame tale.

The novel's experimental form and its thematic focus on reimagined versions of Bluebeard and its variants help give meaning to the tales that seem, on first read, to fall outside the Bluebeard tradition, particularly the three stories that explicitly revolve around non-European characters and settings: "Like This," set in Paris among a community of Yoruba ancestral spirits attached to the story's protagonist, Brown; "Hide, Seek," set in Asyût, Egypt, and Osogbo, Nigeria; and "My Daughter the Racist," set in an unnamed country, occupied by American or European forces, in the Middle East or North Africa. With these three stories, the violence of European traditions—whether literary, as in the tales of Bluebeard, Fitcher's Bird, Mr. Fox, and Reynardine, or geopolitical, as in histories of war, colonialism, and imperialism—resonates with the ever-present shades of violence implicit in western understandings of romantic love. "Like This," for instance, is a story of love, desire, murder, resurrection, separation, and eternal union between a Yoruba woman and an Englishman. Though "seriously in love," the woman one day "stamped her foot and wished her man dead," and he died (90). Desperate to have him back, she calls on all her magic—"books and candles and all the tears she could cry"—and sacrifices all the children she might have had, which returns him to her; not so much grateful as exhausted, he says they can't go on and he drives her to Paris, where he leaves her on a seemingly random street (89–90). She takes nothing with her but what she has on: "a brown dress, flat brown shoes, and a shabby coat of the same colour" (91). The narrator now refers to her as Brown, to be distinguished from Blue, a woman who welcomes Brown to Paris, to a house where she is to live, where she is to write, a woman whose skin color matches Brown's but who is otherwise better looking, tidier, smaller, sweeter, warm, a woman who claims that she was meant for the Englishman. Indeed, the idyllic life Blue comes to share with the Englishman seems to suggest that they were meant for each other. Despite appearances, however, the Englishman still longs for Brown, and when he sends Blue away he falls into a stupor.

Meanwhile, Brown spends her days staring at the sheets of blank paper and the raft of fountain pens provided for her, unclear as to what she is supposed to write even when the notes slipped under her door tell her to "Write the stories" (96). Trying to do so, she begins with "Once upon a time," but nothing follows. She is overcome with a sense of having lost something, though she is not clear what that might be; she makes a list of everything she's ever lost and roams the streets of Paris searching. Thinking her grief may be for a loved one who has died, she walks through Père Lachaise; in the cemetery, she encounters Reynardine, who channels her Yoruba ancestors, and they explain to her what she is to write: "Tell the stories. Tell them to us. We want to know all the ways you're still like us, and the all the ways you've changed. Talk to us. We're from a different place and time" (104). When the spirits of Brown's Yoruba ancestors return Reynardine to himself, he

further encourages her to write the stories, but Brown is resolute—she wants what she has lost. Reynardine finally agrees that if she writes the stories, he will return what she has lost. So she writes and writes and writes, but when Reynardine upholds his side of the bargain and delivers the Englishman to her, he is already dead. Brown confronts Reynardine with her disappointment, her outrage at having been tricked, and Reynardine dares her to join her man, dares her to "be lost together" with him (108). Never having considered this option before, she is now happy to accept Reynardine's dare. At that, Brown and the Englishman find themselves entombed together, a happy ending: "They were together, and there was no one else… In the darkness they learnt to waltz. Then they lit the candle… And they let its flame warm their stone house for a little while as they danced on behind their locked door" (109). Here, it is not the European fairy tale formula—Brown's attempt at writing prior to her encounter with Reynardine begins and ends with "Once upon a time"—that brings about the (un)conventional happily-ever-after but rather Brown's writing for her Yoruba ancestors, her continuing a tradition that grants significant agency for her to tell her own stories, unmoored from the constraints of an entrenched narrative inheritance: "Those stories," her ancestral spirits instruct her, "belong to us. It doesn't matter what language they're in, or what they're about; they belong to us. And we gave them to you without looking at them first. So now it's time to see what we've done" (104).

The themes and tropes and questions at play in "Like This" wend their way through the novel's other stories, moving beyond a critique of the violence lurking in European narrative genres like the fairy tale to encompass similarities in other European cultural mythologies. "Hide, Seek," for example, calls attention to the resonances between much western visual art and the dominant Bluebeard trope: the dismembered woman or the woman in/as parts. In this story, a boy born to a poor market family in Asyût is adopted by a wealthy widow, an art collector who "only collected art that was body pieces, one considered piece at a time, painstaking finds because she was looking for a collection that, when put together in a room, would create the suggestion of a woman" (216). Around the same time, a girl is born in Osogbo with a heart too heavy to bear, "heavy because it was open, and so things filled it, and so things rushed out of it" (218); in an effort to lighten her heart, she seeks to give her love away, but it always returns to her until she finally decides that "she had to hide her heart somewhere until she was big enough to keep hold of its weight" (220). When the art collector and her adopted son finally acquire all the body parts to evoke a woman, they realize their collection is in need of a heart, so they travel to a west African shrine known for the sound of a beating heart, the shrine where the girl has left her heart for safekeeping. Once there, the heart calls to the boy, and his adopted mother senses that he knows where it is, although he does not reveal to her that the heart has called to him. The boy will not take the heart without its owner, so he arranges their art collection—their dismembered woman—around the shrine and asks his mother for five days. When, on the sixth day, he awakens and the heart's owner has not come, he leaves. Like Bluebeard and

Fitcher's Bird and a great deal of European "high" art, "Hide, Seek" is not a love story, though it seems at times to approach one as it exposes the dark underbelly of gendered discourses that hold romance, desire, and beauty together with need, possession, and violence.

Running in, around, and through the Bluebeard-inflected stories at the center of *Mr. Fox* is the story of St. John, Mary, and Daphne, a frame tale that similarly disrupts and reimagines an enduring—and enduringly misogynistic—European cultural discourse. Here, Oyeyemi anchors the myth of the female muse, passive inspiration for male genius, to the Bluebeard tradition, thus inviting a consideration of the many ways an ostensible paean borders on, perhaps collapses into, a controlling obsession. Initially brought into being by St. John's imagination, Mary soon becomes her own person, at first figuratively as she shares her ideas and opinions, as she challenges St. John's sexism and pushes him to see more in Daphne, and then literally as she takes material form, befriends and encourages Daphne's ambitions, and finally walks away from the two of them. Moving back and forth across the twentieth century, creating a transnational circuit of stories and characters, articulating gendered and raced cultural conventions with the misogyny and violence of the Bluebeard tradition, *Mr. Fox* encourages us to think and rethink European literary and artistic traditions, suggesting not answers so much as additional questions. It is precisely this invitation that draws me to *Mr. Fox* over and over again, the questions giving wondrous shape to the multiple dimensions of my work—fairy tale studies, critical race theory, feminism—in ways that help me understand and appreciate even more fully their deeply imbricated impulses, their deeply imbricated natures, histories, theoretical trajectories. Oyeyemi's resistance to allegory and ideological polemic in favor of cross-cutting, entangled, provocative allusions and insights, critiques and reconsiderations that challenge the mythologies at the heart of European literary and artistic culture, opens the novel to a wonderful and rich excess of questions and inspires me to embrace the messy entanglements implicit in my own research, the questions whose answers remain just beyond reach, perhaps more important than those I feel I may have resolved.

A brief sampling of the fantastically dizzying intellectual queries I want to consider with Oyeyemi: How and why is the novel's transnational orientation significant to the themes of gender, race, culture, narrative production, art, and violence at play in *Mr. Fox*? What, if anything, does the novel's transnationalism have to do with a feminist reclamation of the muse, a feminist intervention into the Bluebeard tradition? Alternatively, or perhaps complementarily, why might the Bluebeard tradition be productive for a novel of transnational storytelling? And why might Oyeyemi choose the Bluebeard tale type in order to structure her feminist critique and reinvention of the muse? That is, how and why might women's creative agency be related to the themes of Bluebeard? How does violence motivate the narrative? And what types of violence? If *Mr. Fox* is an obvious meditation on Bluebeard and on the figure of the muse, it is also a meditation on love. As such, what might it tell us about love? And what types of love? How might it challenge

us to think love beyond the strictures of hegemonic, heteronormative, "Hallmark" love? What role do sacrifice and/or lack of recognition and/or misunderstanding and/or unrequited desires play in our understandings and theorizations of love and desire and gender and violence?

These questions and many more proliferate with each reading of *Mr. Fox*, a dazzling, brilliant novel that enchanted me on first read and that continues to enchant me with every subsequent read. Even more than the intellectual explorations *Mr. Fox* occasions, it is the novel's cleverness, its unexpected narrative turns, its stitching together of real and fantastic, its knowing and ironic asides amid passages of sheer lyric beauty, what I understand and feel, bodily and emotionally, to be a certain perfection in its crafting that has so moved me, that has so filled me with awe and wonder, not only at what's smart about *Mr. Fox* but also at what's captivating about it. The novel's coda—two fox stories, two love stories, one tragic, the other moving and hopeful—makes clear that Oyeyemi's magical realism is more like real magic. Along these lines, *Mr. Fox* is an escape artist of a novel, a novel that resists hermeneutic attempts to contain it, at least my attempts to contain it in the form of book reviews, articles, book chapters. In the end, *Mr. Fox* is a novel that reminds us that reading matters, of course, but so, too, does magic.

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Petre M. Andreevski, *Quecke*

Walter Leimgruber

Die Quecke ist ein von Bauern und Gärtnerinnen gefürchtetes Wurzelunkraut. Ihre Verbreitung erfolgt über lange Wurzeltriebe, die mehrfach ausschlagen, sogenannte Rhizome. Diese wachsen schnell und bilden zahlreiche Tochterpflanzen. Ihre unverwüstliche Lebenskraft hat der Quecke ihren Namen gegeben. Das althochdeutsche Wort *queck* für „kräftig", „lebendig" findet sich noch im Begriff „quicklebendig".

Mit dieser ebenso ungeliebten wie unscheinbaren Pflanze vergleicht der Schriftsteller Petre M. Andreevski (1934–2006) seine Landsleute, die Makedonier. Kein sehr schmeichelhafter Vergleich, könnte man meinen, aber ohne diese Eigenschaft des kräftigen Überlebenstriebes unter widrigsten Bedingungen würde es sie nicht mehr geben. Andreevski erzählt das Leben des Bauernehepaars Jon Meglenoski und Velika Meglenoska. Es ist die Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs und der Jahre danach. Jon und Velika berichten von ihrem Leben, ihrem Kennenlernen, der Arbeit auf dem Feld, den Geburten der Kinder, von Hunger, Seuchen, Aberglauben, Krieg und Tod. Auf die unzähligen Schicksalsschläge folgt das Aufrappeln, bevor die nächste Katastrophe folgt.

Makedonien ist Kampffront verfeindeter Mächte. Die Serben stehen auf der Seite Frankreichs und Englands, die Bulgaren auf der Seite Deutschlands und Österreich-Ungarns. Die Makedonier werden von beiden Seiten zwangsrekrutiert. Dann beginnt das gegenseitige Abschlachten, während die Dörfer geplündert werden und Frauen, Kinder und alte Leute am Hunger oder an Seuchen sterben. Auch Jons und Velikas Kinder sind darunter, alle fünf. An dem Tag, als Jon stirbt,

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bringt Velika schliesslich ihr sechstes Kind zur Welt: Roden, der als einziger überleben wird.

Jon liegt mit den serbischen Truppen in den Wäldern, rennt bei Sturmangriffen um sein Leben, wird schliesslich schwer verletzt. Sein Bruder Mirče dient als „Meglenov“ bei den Bulgaren, Jon als „Meglenović“ bei den Serben. „Warum schlagen sie sich nicht daheim“, fragt Mirče, der ausgerechnet von seinem Bruder gefangengenommen wird. Jon überlebt den Krieg mit knapper Not, kehrt schwer traumatisiert zurück ins Dorf und verfällt dem Alkohol, als er vom Tod seiner Kinder erfährt.

Andreevskis Roman, im Original 1980 erschienen, ist in seiner Heimat längst Klassiker, darüber hinaus aber, wie praktisch alles aus diesem kleinen Land, kaum bekannt. Sein Erzählstil ist der eines Bauernromans, der aber durch die wechselnde Erzählperspektive modern wirkt. Das einzige überlebende Kind, Roden, kehrt zur Beerdigung seiner Mutter ins Dorf zurück, wo ihm ein Freund der Eltern deren Lebensgeschichte erzählt, wie er sie von beiden gehört hat. Die Sprache, fest im Dialekt von Andreevskis Herkunftsregion verankert, ist von knorriger Schönheit. In der Übersetzung gelingt es Benjamin Langer, die bildreiche Sprache atmosphärisch zu übertragen und die Gemütlichkeit deutscher Dialekte konsequent zu vermeiden.

Im Ersten Balkankrieg 1912 kämpfen Serben, Bulgaren, Griechen und Montenegriner gemeinsam gegen die Osmanen um die Region, im zweiten 1913 kämpfen alle gegeneinander um die Region, und im Ersten Weltkrieg mischen auch die Deutschen, Franzosen und Türken mit. Den Makedoniern wird übel mitgespielt. „‚Die Soldaten‘, sagt Misajle der Schmied, ‚was für Soldaten, das weiss ich nicht‘, sagt er, ‚ob bulgarische, ob serbische, deutsche, arabische, französische, wer weiss das schon? Es sollen viele Soldaten kommen‘, sagt er, ‚auf der Flucht sollen sie sein, stehlen und brandschatzen …‘“ Die Dorfbewohner fliehen. Einer von ihnen trägt auf der Flucht die *gajda*, den geliebten Dudelsack, mit sich, mit der er in besseren Zeiten zum Tanz aufspielt, will sich die Musik, die für die Menschen hier so wichtig ist, nicht nehmen lassen. Wann immer sich eine Möglichkeit ergibt, reihen sie sich zum Tanz. Doch nun ist die Musik verstummt.

Jon wird mit anderen Verwundeten auf Wagen ins Lazarett gekarrt. „In Živojno hielten wir an den Soldatenfriedenhöfen an. Die Friedhöfe sind mit Stacheldraht umzäunt und haben hölzerne Kreuze. Am französischen Friedhof steht auf Serbisch: ‚Gefallen für Frankreich‘. Ist hier vielleicht irgendwo Frankreich? Zum Teufel auch, sag ich bei mir. Für wen sterben wir denn, sag ich bei mir, alle Länder machen sich hier Friedhöfe, und uns schmeissen sie auf fremde.“

Trotz des Elends vermag Andreevski den Alltag, auch das Absurde, lakonisch zu schildern. In einer Kampfpause baden serbische und bulgarische Soldaten und die Makedonier, die auf beiden Seiten kämpfen, gemeinsam im Fluss. „Für die meisten ist es das zweite Vollbad in ihrem Leben. Das erste war sicher die Taufe in der Kirche.“ Die Makedonier auf beiden Seiten sprechen von sich als „*naši*“, die

unseren. Es ist klar wer dazugehört, es sind die Menschen, die in dieser Region leben, nicht diejenigen, die von aussen kommen wie die Serben und Bulgaren.

Religiöse Vorstellungen und Aberglaube führen zu ebenso verblüffenden wie poetischen Erklärungen von Natur- und Weltereignissen. „Und beim Anstillen legte ich ihr ein Sieb auf den Kopf, damit das Kind immer satt werde, und ein Buch legte ich ihr auf den Kopf, damit es lerne." Doch das Befolgen der Regeln wird sogleich ironisch gebrochen: „Wo wird es hier schon etwas lernen, das arme Kind, aber so ist es halt überliefert. Und einen roten Apfel legte ich ihr auf den Kopf, damit das Kind schön werde." Kranke legen sich unter Bären, die von Bärenführern durchs Dorf geführt werden, weil sie sich davon Heilung versprechen. Velika tanzt um die Gräber der ersten beiden toten Kinder, um den Teufel zu narren und so zu tun, als mache es ihr nichts aus, damit er anderswohin ziehe, um sich seine Opfer zu suchen. „Der Zorn der ganzen Welt endet hier bei uns", sagt einmal Lazor Nočeski, der mit seinen Sprüchen das Geschehen als eine Art Kommentator aus dem Off begleitet.

Die Dorfgesellschaft ist patriarchalisch und hart. „Für uns Bauern ist das Glück wechselhaft, das Unglück aber dauert an", lautet eine der Weisheiten von Nočeski. Velika rackert sich wie alle Frauen ab. „Schon Mutter hat immer zu mir gesagt: ‚Wird ein Mädchen geboren, dann weinen auch die Abtraufen.' Damals hab ich nicht gewusst, warum Mutter das zu mir sagte, aber jetzt weiss ich es …" Als sie schwanger und kugelrund vor dem Haus die Wäsche wäscht, muss sie furzen. Ihr Mann hört das und lässt sie, nachdem er das Dorf zusammengerufen hat, dreimal auf einem Bein um das Haus hüpfen. Sie möchte vor Schande sterben, denn vor allem für Frauen sind körperbezogene Prozesse extrem schambehaftet. Sie wünscht immer wieder sich den Tod, ihm den Tod, bemitleidet ihn aber auch, weil sie sieht, dass in ihm etwas zerbrochen ist. Er aber quält sie: „‚Was wartest du denn auch auf mich', sagte ich [Jon], ‚damit ich dir die Flöhe zwischen den Schenkeln zerquetsche?' Und verpasse ihr eine Backpfeife. Sie hält sich die Wange und schaut mich an wie eine erschrockene Katze."

Das Gebiet, das im 19. Jahrhundert von Geographen als Makedonien bezeichnet wurde, gehörte im Mittelalter abwechselnd zu Byzanz, zum Bulgarischen und zum Serbischen Reich. Im letzten Viertel des 14. Jahrhunderts wurde es von den Osmanen erobert und bis 1912 von ihnen beherrscht. Um die Wende zum 20. Jahrhundert kam es zu Aufständen, die blutig niedergeschlagen wurden. Wer in dieser Zeit in Makedonien geboren wurde, begann sein Leben als Untertan des Osmanischen Reichs, kam von 1913 bis 1915 zum Königreich Serbien, anschliessend zu Bulgarien und fand sich Ende 1918 im Königreich der Serben, Kroaten und Slowenen wieder. Im Zweiten Weltkrieg kam er wieder unter bulgarische Herrschaft, nach Kriegsende zum sozialistischen Jugoslawien. Wer alt wurde, konnte seine letzten Jahre in einem siebten Staat, der 1991 unabhängig gewordenen Republik Makedonien, verbringen. Die älteren Makedonier bezeichneten die historischen Perioden daher mit „*vo turskoto*", „*vo bugarskoto*", „*vo srpskoto*", zur Zeit der türkischen, bulgarischen, serbischen Herrschaft, jedes Mal neue

Familiennamen mit sich bringend, neue Gesetze, neue Beamte, Lehrer und Popen, neue Schulbücher, die Gottesdienste mal in Griechisch, mal in Bulgarisch, mal in Serbisch (Boškovska 2012).

Diplomaten und Abenteuerreisende, welche die Region in der Endphase des Osmanischen Reiches besuchten, berichteten von der bunten Vielfalt der ‚Rassen'. Die kulinarischen Begriffe *salade macédoine* oder *Macedonia di frutta* erinnern bis heute daran. Türken, Albaner, Juden, Vlachen, Roma und kleinere Volksgruppen lebten hier. Die christlichen Slawen als grösste Gruppe wurden je nachdem Bulgaren, Serben, Slawen, makedonische Slawen oder Makedonier genannt. Ein nationales Bewusstsein war den meisten von ihnen noch fremd; ihre Selbstidentifikation wie auch die Zuordnung der Obrigkeit basierte auf religiösen, nicht auf ethnischen Kriterien: Sie waren Christen (Boškovska 2009).

In den Balkankriegen verloren die Osmanen Makedonien an Griechenland, Serbien und Bulgarien. Etwa die Hälfte (das sog. Ägäisch-Makedonien) fiel an Griechenland, rund 40% (Vardar-Makedonien) an Serbien und ein kleines Stück (Pirin-Makedonien) ging an Bulgarien. In Griechenland und Bulgarien wird seither eine strikte Assimilierungspolitik verfolgt, welche keine makedonische Minderheit anerkennt. Weite Teile der slawischen Christen sahen sich allerdings schon in der Zwischenkriegszeit als Makedonier, durften sich aber nicht so bezeichnen. Im Jugoslawien der Nachkriegszeit entstand die Sozialistische Republik Makedonien mit einem hohen Grad an Staatlichkeit und einer kodifizierten Schriftsprache. Erstmals war es möglich, sich zur makedonischen Nation zu bekennen und die eigene Sprache frei zu verwenden. Dies führte zu einem *nation building*-Prozess und zur Herausbildung einer eigenen Geschichtsschreibung. Doch dies reizte die Nachbarn, weil der Raum schon durch ihre nationale Geschichtsschreibung belegt war. Der bulgarische Botschafter bei der EU, Dimităr Cančev, warf 2013 Makedonien vor, die Geschichte seiner Nachbarländer zu stehlen (Boškovska 2012). Wer raubt wem die Geschichte, wenn ein Raum durch Jahrhunderte hinweg von immer wieder anderen Mächten beherrscht wurde, denen nationale oder ethnische Kriterien unbekannt waren? Kann man für die Antike, das Mittelalter oder die Frühe Neuzeit die Quellenbegriffe einfach als heutige nationale Zuschreibungen verstehen? Was haben die heutigen Griechen mit den antiken Makedonen gemeinsam? Etwa gleich wenig wie die heutigen slawischen und erst später eingewanderten Makedonier. Warum also sind sie angeblich Bestandteil der Geschichte der einen, aber keinesfalls der anderen?

1991 wurde Makedonien unabhängig. Und traf auf die massive Feindschaft Griechenlands, das einen Staat mit diesem Namen verhindern wollte. Ein griechischer Politiker erklärte 1992, der Gebrauch des Namens sei ein *casus belli*, und forderte „eine aktive Vernichtungspolitik gegen diesen Zwergstaat" (zit. nach Boškovska 2012: 18). Als EU- und NATO-Mitglied verfügt Griechenland über erhebliche Druckmittel und sabotiert Makedoniens internationale Beziehungen. Und Bulgarien betrachtet das Land als zweiten bulgarischen Staat. Zunächst nehmen die Makedonier diese Aggressionen gelassen, witzeln etwa, wenn den

Griechen der Name Makedonien so heilig sei, könne man ja die Staatsnamen tauschen. Doch die jahrzehntelange Veto- und Negierungspolitik wie auch die Gleichgültigkeit der internationalen Gemeinschaft führen dazu, dass sie ihre Nation ebenfalls in prestigereichen historischen Tiefen zu verorten versuchen. Während einiger Jahre lässt eine rechtsnationale Regierung die Hauptstadt Skopje mit Statuen der antiken Makedonen und pseudoantiken Gebäuden vollstellen. Dieser im 19. und 20. Jh. in ganz Europa übliche Vorgang wird nun mit Spott und Hohn übergossen. Sicherlich ein verunglückter Versuch, doch warum schweigt man zu den nationalistischen Wahnvorstellungen der Griechen und Bulgaren? Und warum zwingt der Westen Makedonien schliesslich, sich nicht nur in „Nordmakedonien“ umzubenennen, sondern auch eine fremde Kontrolle der Geschichts- und Schulbücher anzuerkennen? ‚Grossintellektuelle‘ wie die Philosophin Judith Butler und manche ‚liberalen‘ und ‚linken‘ Kräfte machen sich stark für die Namensänderung und verunglimpfen die Gegner dieser Zwangsmassnahmen als Rechtsextremisten (The Guardian, 20.7.2018). Auf dem Hügel über Skopje, einst Sitz der osmanischen Kolonialmacht, thront heute die amerikanische Botschaft, gebaut in einem Gebiet, in dem eigentlich nicht gebaut werden darf – doch wer Macht hat, muss sich um solche Details nicht kümmern, ob Osmanen oder Amerikaner ist einerlei.

Immerhin herrscht kein Krieg. Doch wer kann, wandert aus, versucht der Armut und Perspektivlosigkeit zu entkommen. Geprägt von der jahrhundertelangen Erfahrung der Unterdrückung, zermürbt von den Zumutungen der Nachbarländer und enttäuscht von der Unfähigkeit der eigenen Politiker fehlt den Menschen die Hoffnung auf ein besseres Leben in Würde. Die Figuren aus dem Buch leben weiter, beklagen den Lauf der Zeit und wissen, dass das Elend nicht vorbei ist, vielleicht nie vorbei sein wird. Ohne die Eigenschaft der Quecke, allen Widrigkeiten zu trotzen, wären die Makedonier schon längst gräzisiert, bulgarisiert, serbisiert, würden nicht mehr mit „Unseren“ tanzen und feiern.

Das Buch schildert mit der Sprachgewalt des Schriftstellers eine Welt, die kaum jemand kennt und die doch in eindringlichster Weise die zentralen Themen unseres Faches, der Europäischen Ethnologie, behandelt, den Alltag der Menschen, gerade auch in seiner traditionellen Dimension, allerdings bar jeglicher Romantisierung, das Suchen nach Identität und Zugehörigkeit in einer feindseligen Umwelt, den Kampf um Selbstbestimmung und Eigenständigkeit, diktiert von den Mächtigen und verloren von den Kleinen und den zu spät Gekommenen. Wäre es eine aussereuropäische Nation, würde man wohl vom Kampf gegen imperiale Herrschaft reden, von post- (oder doch nicht so post-)kolonialen Abhängigkeiten und dem wuchtigen Zusammenprall von kleinen Lebenswelten und grosspolitischen Wetterlagen – damals wie heute.

Die Quecke aber ist nicht nur ein Un-, sondern auch ein Heilkraut. Ihr Wurzelstock findet bei verschiedenen Leiden Verwendung, ihr Extrakt lässt Müdigkeit und Abgeschlagenheit verschwinden, wirkt erquickend. Und über achtzig verschiedene Insektenarten leben auf der vielgeschmähten Pflanze. Für Bauern und

Gärtnerinnen aber bleibt sie ein lästiges Unkraut – wie Makedonien für die Nachbarn, die durch ihre EU-Mitgliedschaft mächtiger denn je sind. Und so ist die Quecke unter den Nationen einmal mehr chauvinistischen Pestiziden ausgesetzt – wie schon zur Zeit von Jon und Velika.

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Jonathan Safran Foer, *Here I Am*

Orvar Löfgren

Sometimes one stumbles on a book at the very right moment. I started to read Jonathan Safran Foer's novel *Here I Am*, first published in 2016, when I was working on a study of silent domestic routines and habits, exploring this undercurrent in everyday life that is rarely noticed or reflected upon. What goes on when nothing seems to be happening? Routines constitute a cultural field full of tensions and paradoxes. What kinds of meanings and values are hidden in them and how are they related to questions of power, control, or freedom? They can often provoke conflicts, but, again, their invisibility or taken-for-grantedness often make such conflicts difficult to grasp and handle. Routines are often embodied, resting in the limbs rather than in the mind.

Foer's novel of the married life of a New York couple captures the ways in which domestic routines and rituals keep going, but slowly change. Jonathan Foer (b. 1977) belongs to the category of contemporary writers who can capture and verbalize such subtle and unnoticed transformations in ways that make any ethnographer envious. In the novel we follow the couple Julia and Jacob. The author describes the web of small routines and endearing rituals that bind the couple together. It is constructive work that all couples try and that slowly becomes a world of invisible habits. When Julia and Jacob start to live together "everything seemed to move toward ritual," as domestic routines were emotionally charged. Foer describes their morning program:

Julia takes a shower first while Jacob puts the breakfast on the table. She always pours the first cup of coffee for him. He gets the morning paper and gives her the section he knows she wants to start with. She gives him a kiss as he leaves the house.

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But gradually, the morning routines start to change. Foer depicts how Julia's and Jacob's marriage begins to erode by focusing on all these seemingly unimportant changes: "Time passed, the world exerted itself, and Jacob and Julia began to forget to do things on purpose." The cherished routines and rituals were all still there, but slowly "the inside of life became far smaller than the outside, creating a cavity, an emptiness." (Foer 2017:15) Julia forgets to pour him coffee and Jacob starts to pick his own favorite part of the newspaper first. And that morning kiss? Maybe it can wait until tomorrow. Small, unconscious transformations that signal a major change. The habits of the partner that once seemed so charming, begin to get irritating. The cherished ritual movements slowly turn into mere mechanical reflexes. It is a changing flow of energy that Foer depicts. The eroding routines signal a new but still invisible journey—that of breaking up a marriage, dismantling a home.

The example of Julia and Jacob illustrates two different dimensions of routines. They are activities and choices that turn into an invisible pattern, but at the same time their seeming insignificance may cloak larger issues; they carry a hidden power. Questions like these touch on the ways in which conflicts are emotionally charged and transformed: problematic feelings like anger and frustration have to be suppressed or avoided, they are regarded as both undesirable and unbearable in everyday life (Bendix 2015). They belong to the category of "ugly feelings" (Ngai 2005) that often are expressed in muted and devious ways, turned into sarcastic comments, indirect aggression, tactic inattention, or lack of emotional commitment. Small domestic squabbles can hide major conflicts. In addition, there are subtle ways feelings are registered and communicated through all the senses, "ear to ear, nose to nose, skin to skin" (Bendix 2005), often in ways that are difficult to put into words.

Everyday activities are organized by developing routines, rhythms, rituals, and multi-tasking. It is about economizing, tacit agreements, indirect negotiations, cutting corners. It is about the half-said, the shrug, the nod. Social and emotional messages go back and forth, often without being put into words. If we were really persistent ethnographers, trying to either observe or interview people about such routines, the chances are that even then we would miss many of the small micro-routines, the bodily reactions, or the examples of "just going through the movements" that seem more like reflexes than culturally learned habits. Foer is good at showing us the workings of such activities.

Routines are tricky because they are often seen as a stable undercurrent that creates order and continuity in life, sometimes blocking or preventing change; but behind the surface things may be changing, slowly, and unnoticed. Such seemingly insignificant changes may evolve into major transformations. Foer's novel describes what I would like to call *cultural erosion*, using a metaphor that focuses on gradual wear and tear, and decay.

People are going through the same motions, but something is happening. Thomas O'dell (2006) has borrowed a phrase from firefighters, likening such creeping transformations to a cultural backdraft. The fire is hidden in a smouldering,

invisible ember in a closed room. Everything seems as usual until someone opens the door and allows in the oxygen that causes the fire to explode. Looking for break points in everyday life, we can find situations in which just a side remark, an afterthought, or an action can act as a catalyst, making a routine flare up into something else.

Foer's ethnography reminded me of how a woman talking about her divorce tries to reconstruct the gradual break-up of the marriage:

> Every night for many years I or my husband, whoever was first in the bathroom, used to put toothpaste on the other's brush. It was a habit that signaled love and care in a small detail. Every time I seized my prepared toothbrush I smiled and felt a greeting of love from my husband. One night there was no paste on my brush. Not long time after that we understood that our love had vanished. (Ehn and Löfgren 2010: 112)

Foer's novel follows the making and unmaking of routines during changes in the life cycle. From the moment his couple moves together and creates a joint household, with discussions about how to turn your and my routines into ours, or inventing new ones, to the many adjustments as the children arrive and grow up. And then, finally, into the gradual breakdown.

Reading Foer, I was reminded of anthropologist Kathleen Stewart's discussion of the precarity of seemingly stable routines. She follows how the world of her mother, who has dementia, is "unworldling," and slowly shrinking. Routines and activities disappear or become problematic. Gradually dementia makes her mother forget much of her former life and the skills with which she used to run her home. There are little slips of paper everywhere reminding her of what to do; she is getting lost in her everyday, things that used to be friendly now turn problematic or threatening. Using her mother's experiences, Stewart explores the power of precariousness in a changing everyday life. Routines become difficult, unreliable, and risky. She asks, how does precarity take particular form? How does it pull some collection of forces, situations, sensibilities, and materialities into alignment? How does it become nervously generative as something new? (Stewart 2012: 522)

In order to understand the workings of domestic habits we need to find situations and break points in which self-evident routines become visible and problematic. There are different kinds of transformations and collapses of everyday life—slow or fast, dramatic or undramatic. When studying routines it is easy to get stuck in the reassuring idea of a constantly repeated pattern. If we look at the transformations of making and unmaking, another more dynamic picture emerges. It is important to look closer for traces of the subversive potential of routines. This aspect is probably not the first thing that comes to mind in connection to inconspicuous repetitive behaviour. But when you examine ordinary ways of everyday life, hour by hour, day by day, you may find that these seemingly repetitive acts may, in fact, produce small and successive changes, hardly perceptible but possibly important in the long run. What one sees as "the same procedure as usual"

does not have to be that repetitive at all. It may hide surprising and subversive transformations, as in the example of Julia and Jacob. A trivial argument about morning routines—the loading of a dishwasher or turning the thermostat up—may in reality be about something much larger. Inconspicuous acts can turn into provocations. Routines thus become controversial sites of struggle and domination, but also of resistance. People drag their feet, defend old routines, forget, or ignore things. Again, it is the subtlety that is important in the power play in such activities. The strong weapon of indirectness is at work here—a special kind of micro-politics, where what is seen as a "non-event" may turn out to be hiding something very eventful. Mundane activities can change both ways, they can be naturalized into invisibility and mindless reflexes, but even the most trivial routines may be transformed into more conscious acts, something people experience as reassuring and comforting, or giving some symbolic meaning.

What happened to Julia and Jacob? They make a new start, building new homes and relations. Jacob is busy planning:

> In time, his house would resemble his home—some rugs, better hardware, wall colors in keeping with the Geneva Convention, paintings and photos and lithos, calming lamplight, art books stacked on surfaces, throws not thrown but crisply folded and laid over sofas and chairs, maybe a wood-burning stove in the corner. And in time, everything that was possible would be actual. He'd get a girlfriend, or not. Buy an unexpected car, or probably not. (Foer 2017: 648)

Both Julia and Jacob are busy building new routines and micro-rituals, or re-inventing old ones. But that is another story.

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Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*

Leah Lowthorp

Walter Mignolo, author of *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (2011), is a leading theorist of decoloniality. This school of thought, led by Latin American scholars, that asserts the interdependence of modernity and coloniality—that modernity emerged in the context of colonialism and cannot be conceived independently from it—and questions Western universalism via seeking alternative histories and futures. The work is one of Mignolo's latest books in a robust history of scholarship exploring what he terms the "colonial matrix of power." As a folklorist, I am interested in the promise that Mignolo's engagement of tradition and modernity holds for the field of Folkloristics and, more specifically, for the study of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

As Mignolo describes, "the distinction between modernity/tradition is part of the larger strategy of the denial of coevalness, the creation and reproduction of colonial and imperial differences, and, more generally, of building and maintaining the colonial matrix of power" (2011: 174). As he states, in the "modern/colonial world," the world was mapped into racial hierarchies of difference associated with space—a geographical location—and time—modern or pre-modern. Mignolo enumerates a number of what he terms "historico-structural nodes" associated with the modern/colonial world. Those of most interest to my work include the following:

> 5. A global racial/ethnic hierarchy that privileged European people over non-European people. …

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> 9. An aesthetic hierarchy (art, literature, theater, opera) that through repetitive institutions (museums, school of beaux arts, opera houses, glossy paper magazines with splendid reproductions of paintings) manages the senses and shapes sensibilities by establishing norms of the beautiful and the sublime, of what art is and what it is not, what shall be included and what shall be excluded, what shall be awarded and what shall be ignored.
> 10. An epistemic hierarchy that privileged Western knowledge and cosmology over non-Western knowledge and cosmologies was institutionalized in the global university system, publishing houses, and Encyclopedia Britannica, on paper and online.
> 11. A linguistic hierarchy between European languages and non-European languages privileged communication and knowledge/theoretical production in the former and subalternized the latter as sole producers of folklore or culture, but not of knowledge/theory.
> 12. A particular conception of the "modern subject," an idea of Man, introduced in the European Renaissance, became the model for the Human and for Humanity, and the point of reference for racial classification and global racism (18–19).

Mignolo's work has been fundamental to my process of developing my dissertation into a book, and I've found it invaluable in helping me think through familiar issues in new ways. In my book manuscript, *Deep Cosmopolitanism: Kutiyattam, Dynamic Tradition, and Globalizing Heritage in Kerala, India*, I consider the UNESCO ICH program through Mignolo's decolonial lens. As we know, UNESCO's ICH program evidenced an organizational shift from tangible to intangible heritage. This shift was not only the culmination of a decades-long movement by the global South for greater equity in the arena of international heritage recognition, it was also a response to postcolonial critique of the Eurocentrism of globally dominant definitions of heritage. Up until that point, international organizations such as UNESCO had conceptualized heritage in Eurocentric terms—privileging materiality, expert knowledge, monumentality, and aesthetics. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* helped me recognize that, despite this step in the right direction, the UNESCO ICH program's endangered-local to safeguarded-global trajectory continues to reproduce problematic cultural hierarchies rooted in nineteenth-century ideologies of white supremacy. I argue that, by framing expressive forms primarily from the global South as outmoded and unable to adapt to the contemporary world, the UNESCO ICH program still echoes colonial paradigms that have long framed non-Western peoples, societies, and cultures as backwards, ahistorical, and pre-modern. In Mignolo's terms, as a product of the modern/colonial world, UNESCO ICH still actively reproduces a colonial matrix of power.

Along these lines, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett makes an apt critique of UNESCO ICH. Observing that the ICH program propagates racialized aesthetic

hierarchies, she states, "By admitting cultural forms associated with royal courts and state-sponsored temples, as long as they are not European, the intangible heritage list preserves the division between the West and the rest and produces a phantom list of intangible heritage, a list of that which is not indigenous, not minority, and not non-Western, though no less tangible" (2006: 170). In a similar vein, my work argues against UNESCO's local-to-global trajectory and associated colonial ideologies that characterize art forms primarily from the global South as endangered, in order to propose an alternative narrative that tells the story of a UNESCO ICH form on its own terms. By exploring the global-to-global trajectory of Kutiyattam Sanskrit theater, *Deep Cosmopolitanism* invites a reconsideration of what it means to be cosmopolitan, modern, and traditional in the world today and reflects upon what decolonizing global heritage might look like.

As a folklorist of India, I was already familiar with postcolonial critique. Mignolo's work illuminates useful intersections between decolonial and postcolonial approaches, and helped me see where the latter could be pushed further. I find that Mignolo's perspective melds especially nicely with the work of folklorists who have taken a postcolonial approach to the concepts of tradition and modernity, including Richard Bauman, Charles Briggs, and Sadhana Naithani. Bauman and Briggs examine the role that the discourses of language and tradition in seventeenth- to nineteenth-century Europe played in symbolically co-constructing modernity and contributing to "economies of social inequality." Like Mignolo, they recognize that "the logic of temporality continues to structure imaginations of difference and social inequality" in (post)modernity today (Bauman and Briggs 2003: 307). Naithani (2010) makes a strong case for recognizing what she terms "colonial folkloristics" as the antecedent of international folkloristics. As she points out, current histories of the field privilege European Romantic nationalism without acknowledging the parallel colonial folklore enterprise and associated power imbalances that it depended upon. Briggs and Naithani (2012) extend this by arguing that the Eurocentrism of folklore theory evidences Mignolo's "coloniality of power," and there is therefore a need to recognize that colonialism continues to impact the field of folkloristics in myriad ways today.

Addressing the question of decolonial futures, Mignolo demands that we step away from current universal perspectives dominated by hegemonic conceptions of linear time and associated ideas of progress mapped onto a racialized world. As part of this, he urges that we make efforts to decolonize modernity by decoupling "modernity and tradition." As Mignolo states,

> "…one of the intellectual tasks for imagining and doing toward communal futures … is to undo the colonial difference and the contribution of "time" to it. Thinking in terms of "transmodernity," instead of modernity and tradition, and thinking in terms of Pachamama or Gaia as a living system, instead of nature and culture, may open our imaginary to the restitution of suppressed epistemologies—epistemologies inscribed in languages such as

Mandarin, Arabic, or Aymara, which were relegated, precisely, to the realm of tradition or almost nature from the perspective of a conception of time and of culture" (2011: 174).

In mulling over Mignolo, I have come to view my own field in a new light. Often decried for a lack of rigorous theory, the field of Folkloristics is in fact already partially aligned with decolonial approaches that are seen as the cutting edge of theory today. Through our fluid definition of tradition as "the creation of the future out of the past" (Glassie 1995: 395), our commitment to devalued epistemologies and theory from below, and our discarding of the concept of authenticity as an analytical tool (Bendix 1997), we have already made concrete steps towards decolonizing modernity that deserve more recognition outside of the field. Yet, much remains to be done. The UNESCO ICH program's focus on intergenerational transmission and discarding of the concept of authenticity are similarly important steps, yet much of the coloniality of power the program still evidences and propagates remains to be confronted and undone.

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Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*

Sabina Magliocco

It is a late summer day in perhaps my early teens; I am sprawled on the steep, grassy slope in front of my house in Cincinnati reading a book. I can feel the blades of grass poking the undersides of my skinny brown legs sticking out in front of me. Suddenly, I am overcome with a feeling that is hard to describe: something I read has resonated so profoundly with me that I feel the book's author knows my soul better than I do myself. At the same time, I feel a deep longing for connection to another person who might understand my inner world in the same way.

Until that moment, I hadn't known it was possible to have that sort of connection with another human mind. Certainly not with my parents, although I knew they loved me, nor with my sister, who, four years younger, was not yet someone with whom I sought a connection. At that time, I had few friends; I was treated as an outcast by most of my schoolmates, and with the few who were friendly towards me, I shared only superficial conversations. It was a revelation that an author could write in such a way that not only made stories come alive (that was a given, as I was already a voracious reader), but could reflect a worldview that mirrored my own. That author was Ursula K. Le Guin, and the book was *A Wizard of Earthsea*.

In this essay, I will examine what it was about Le Guin's narrative and style that resonated so strongly with my younger self, and indeed continues to resonate with me today, fifty years later. I will also explore how reading the tales of Earthsea contributed to the scholarly interests and theoretical orientations that I have developed throughout my career as a folklorist, and what lessons they bear for the ethnological sciences more generally.

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Ursula K. Le Guin (1929–2018) was a distinguished American author of speculative fiction and fantasy, poetry, essays, and children's books. She won many prestigious awards, including six Nebulas, seven Hugos, the Howard Vursell Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and, in 2014, the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. At the time I was first reading her—the early 1970s—Le Guin was not widely known outside the niche market of science fiction. By the time of her death in 2018, she was recognized as one of the premiere American literary authors of the twentieth century. While not an ethnologist by training, she was the daughter of anthropologist Alfred E. Kroeber and Theodora Kroeber, author of *Ishi*, a biography of the last Yaqui speaker who spent his twilight years associated with Kroeber and the Museum of Anthropology at University of California at Berkeley. Le Guin brought to her world-building an ethnographic sensibility born of growing up in an anthropological family, the way children of doctors can pick up a diagnostic gift by eavesdropping on conversations in hospital corridors—or at least, they could in the days before laws protecting patient confidentiality made it impossible for their parents to drag them to work. The alternate worlds she created were fully fleshed out, with subsistence strategies, economies, social structures, and meticulously drawn sensory details from everyday life that helped make them believable, even when she told stories about unbelievable things, like magic and dragons and characters who were both male and female, like snails. Her use of language was even more remarkable: direct, spare, and powerful, it draws the reader into the alternate reality of the fantastic while making the fantastic believable.

One might well wonder why, of the thousands of books I have read and the scores that have influenced me, I would choose a young adult fantasy novel to reflect upon for this essay. There are two reasons for this. The first is that I think that what we read roughly between the ages of twelve and twenty-one affects us more deeply than at any other time of life. These are formative years for most people; we are primed to absorb information and experiences from the world around us and incorporate them into the fabric of our being. What young people read matters; it shapes them, as my reading of Le Guin shaped me. These were also the years in which I first read Horace, Virgil, Tacitus, de Beauvior, Marx, Lévi-Strauss, Turner, Malinowski, and many others; but I do not think these authors would have made as much impression on me had I not already read Le Guin. The second reason is that as Le Guin herself observed, the fantastic, whether in folktales, legends, myths, or literature, is hardly trivial, as is commonly assumed in many Western cultures. In her essay "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" she wrote, "… [F]antasy is true, of course. It isn't factual, but it's true" (Le Guin 1979b: 44), by which she meant that fictional genres which use fantastic tropes and engage the imagination can often get at deeper issues, question larger problems, and probe more mysterious topics than writing that is strictly realistic and factual. This is certainly true of folktale, myth, and legend in oral tradition, as well; these genres, which since the eighteenth century have often been considered the stuff of

childhood, are intended for audiences of all ages, and can be understood at many levels.

A Wizard of Earthsea (1968) is the first book of Le Guin's "Earthsea" series, consisting of five novels, a collection of short stories, and a novella set in an archipelagic world of disparate cultures where magic is a natural force and dragons are real. *A Wizard of Earthsea* is the coming-of-age story of Ged, a boy born in poverty on an island of goat-herders who grows up to be one of the most powerful mages in the history of Earthsea. In a world in which magic is real, it is essential that those with talent be properly trained. The cultures of Earthsea developed a system to do so parallel to the ones for other crafts: promising magic-workers are apprenticed to sorcerers who serve local communities. Those lads (for Earthsea is a male-dominated society) whose skills and talents exceed the learning of local specialists were sent for training to the island of Roke, where they could study with the nine Archmages at the school for wizards and become mages themselves. This is what happened to Ged, who first demonstrated his aptitude by calling animals to him, and eventually was able to use his skill to hide his village from marauding invaders. He was sent to study with Ogion, the local mage, and eventually traveled to Roke to learn to become a wizard.

Unlike Harry Potter in another fantasy series about a school for magic, Ged is not initially a likeable character. He is proud, thin-skinned, quick to anger, and overly confident in his own abilities. His arrogance leads him to undertake a dangerous spell to impress a classmate, and in so doing, he unleashes a dark shadow that injures him gravely and kills the Archmage. At this point in the story, the real Ged begins to emerge. Gone are his haughtiness and overconfidence, replaced with an emerging sense of responsibility as he realizes he must hunt down the dark force he unleashed before it does more damage in the world.

Young readers generally read books for content, rather than for style, and I was no exception: what first enraptured me about *A Wizard of Earthsea* was the story. Raised on a combination of folktales and the classics, the tales of Earthsea were familiar, in that they were set in what appeared to be a mythological world: we are told at the beginning that Ged is the hero of a great oral epic poem of Earthsea, called "The Deed of Ged," and that this is the backstory, the story of his beginning, the story *not* told in the epic. Ged has some features of the typical folktale hero, in that he is of humble origins and gains power by mastering a series of tasks. But his journey is not linear, and his most important task, in the first novel, is mastering the shadow he has unleashed, which threatens to destroy him and those around him, and which in a Jungian twist turns out to be a part of himself. So plot-wise, the novel offered a combination of familiarity and novelty that kept my pre-teen self engaged.

Earthsea was coincidentally very similar to the imaginary world I had developed during my childhood, and was fleshing out in adolescence with stories and cultural details I wrote in a series of notebooks. In my make-believe world, as in Earthsea, magic was a natural force, and the knowledge of magic was bound up with

knowledge of nature: the names, properties, and relationships of plants and animals, something to which I had devoted many childhood hours of observation in the wild spaces of both the American Midwest and the Tuscan Maremma, where my family had a summer home. Both worlds had specialists devoted to the study of magic; in my imaginary realm, they were druids, modeled after fanciful nineteenth-century interpretations of the Iron Age Celtic priestly class described by Julius Caesar and Tacitus. Le Guin's school for wizardry on Roke paralleled the druidic academy in Saffron-Ochras, the city of towers, in my imaginary landscape. And like Earthsea, my imaginary world had varied geographies and cultures—not surprising for a child who grew up between two continents. The similarities between Le Guin's literary creation and my private fantasy land were marked enough to engender that feeling of being profoundly known by a complete stranger that struck me so deeply that I still recall it today.

Le Guin's anthropological sensibilities led her to create a world that accurately mirrored human cultural diversity: Earthsea includes cultures very unlike those of Europe, and most of its inhabitants are not white. Her attention to embodied ethnographic details fascinated me: the different languages and dialects of Earthsea, the varieties of legal tender, the ways people made a living and lived, and the two great festivals that were observed at the same time, in similar ways in all the islands of the archipelago: the Long Dance of the summer solstice, and the great revelry of Sunreturn, the winter solstice. Le Guin's skill in constructing believable cultures extended to her treatment of magic, which is presented in these novels as a natural force that can be controlled through the Old Tongue, the original language spoken by dragons and by Earthsea's earliest heroes.

Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to say that the seed of my fascination with the study of magic and culture lies partly in my reading of the Earthsea novels. While Earthsea has a written tradition, it is largely composed of oral cultures, and it was the knowledge passed down through informal means, whether epics like "The Deed of Ged," local knowledge of plants and animals, or the true names of things, that drew my attention: mastering these ways of knowing seemed essential to becoming a mage. Looking back on my career through this lens, I see the stamp of Le Guin on many of my research projects, from my study of Marian festivals and globalization in Sardinia, to my work with Italian vernacular healers, to my analysis of modern witchcraft and the Neopagan movement.

A final way in which Le Guin's work has been pivotal to my professional development is through her writing style. Style was important to Le Guin. In her essay "From Elfland to Poughkeepsie" she wrote:

> Style isn't just how you use English when you write … It isn't something you can do without, though that is what people assume when they announce that they intend to write something "like it is." You can't do without it. There is no "is" without it. Style is how you as a writer see and speak. It is how you

> see your vision, your understanding of the world, your voice (Le Guin 1979a: 94).

For Le Guin, good prose is "exact, clear, powerful. Visually, it is precise and vivid; musically, that is, in the sound of the words, the movement of the syntax, and the rhythm of the sentences—it is subtle and very strong" (90). Whereas in this passage, she is describing the style of E.R. Eddison in *The Worm Ouroboros* (1922), this description could just as easily apply to her own use of language. Le Guin's powerful way with words, her attention not only to the words themselves, but to their rhythm as she combines them, has influenced me more than that of any other single author. To this day, I hear the words I write a few seconds before my fingers hit the keyboard; I listen to the words as I type them, as though I were taking dictation from a storyteller in my brain. This attention to syntax and rhythm is reflected in the descriptive passages with which I often begin my ethnographic pieces, and which alternate with more analytical segments. They are drawn largely from my field journals, where I write in a reflexive, descriptive style, as though I were writing a memoir or diary.

Beyond Le Guin's influence on my personal interests and authorial style, we can glean from her example larger lessons for the ethnological enterprise more broadly. The first is the centrality of evocative writing in both speculative fiction and ethnography. Both genres share a capacity—indeed, a necessity—to draw readers into a world (re)created for them. The ethnographic world, while based on facts, is just as much a product of the authorial pen as is that drawn by the fiction author, a detail notably observed by James Clifford (1986). Good ethnographic writing is therefore not unlike good writing of speculative fiction: it must blend acute attention to sensory detail, enough to draw a pen portrait of an unfamiliar place, with expert storytelling. A second observation is that skilled world-building, whether in ethnography or speculative fiction, creates depictions that resonate with readers, stimulating empathy and even a sense of recognition with other cultures, be they real or fictional. This feeling may be especially acute for readers who feel like they don't quite fit into their own culture. For such readers, both ethnography and fiction can engender the feeling of being seen and understood by a complete stranger; the study of culture may become a way of finding themselves.

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Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Le Saint Lévrier*

Peter Jan Margry

As a student, I traveled in the south of France during a visit to my sister, who was then studying at the academy of arts in Aix-en-Provence. On May 2, 1981, I stumbled upon the oldest bookshop in Aix, the Librarie de Provence on the Cours Mirabeau. One table was dedicated to recently published regional and historical books. My eye fell on one of those inconspicuous covers that are typical of French academic publications. The book I noticed bore an intriguing title: *Le Saint Lévrier* (The Holy Greyhound; Schmitt 1979). It looked like a serious scholarly study of a rather unconventional, not to say a bizarre topic: a centuries-old Catholic cult of a dog, including a pilgrimage.

I had not heard of the author at the time. He was a young French medievalist, Jean-Claude Schmitt (b. 1946), who was on the cusp of becoming a well-known scholar. Decades later, an appointment as director of the prestigious École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris crowned his career. Schmitt belonged to the fourth (or maybe fifth) generation of scholars of that famed historical renewal movement, the so-called École des Annales. Schmitt himself was an *élève* of Jacques Le Goff, a medievalist who had developed an historical-anthropological perspective. Le Goff, and other scholars of the New History, focused their research on everyday life, and in particular on the life of ordinary people, while looking at long-term trends (*la longue durée*) in history, and seeking the help of other disciplines besides history. Schmitt's holy greyhound monograph was interdisciplinary, used a long-term perspective, and dealt with everyday life in rural France; above all it was a weird, extraordinary story based on a unique thirteenth-century document. No surprise, then, that Le Goff chose Schmitt's work for

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publication in his book series, the *Bibliothèque d'Ethnologie Historique*, which sought to throw new light on societies past and present by studying traditions and everyday mores and habits from an historical-ethnological perspective.

The blurb on the back cover enticed me to buy the book. My subsequent reading of it on the sun-kissed beach of the Saint Tropez peninsula was an experience that formed my later career. While the wannabe *beau monde* around me was mostly interested in stars and starlets on their posh over-the-top yachts in the port, I was engrossed in the ancient 'gossip' and opinions on the odd star of Schmitt's study. It is fitting and ironic that the same Schmitt two years later published an ingenious volume of collected essays which united these two worlds, apparently so different: *Les saints et les stars* (Schmitt 1983).

During the first years of my studies, my historical interest had been triggered by the seemingly paradoxical contrast between the mundane and the sacred, and I had already, to some extent, become acquainted with old and modern cults of the saints and the phenomenon of pilgrimage. While touring the Lot department some years earlier, I had scaled the cliff of Rocamadour. In the medieval shrine that stands atop, I had experienced my 'ethnological sensation' in the unexpected and fascinating encounter with an active and mysterious Marian pilgrimage cult. Later, in 1981, when I was studying medieval history, I was also working on a project and a book on contemporary places of pilgrimage, for which I documented old but still active devotional practices in the Netherlands with my Canon FTb and AE photo cameras (Margry 1982). My time scope already seemed to be of Schmittian proportions. But both experiences, in Rocamadour and the Netherlands, only had an impact on me years later when, in the late 1990s, I became involved in the discipline of ethnology at the Meertens Institute in Amsterdam. I got a job there thanks to the photo reportage of pilgrimages I had made years before.

Back to Schmitt and his greyhound. What was Schmitt's quest for a holy dog all about? The story dates from the early thirteenth century, when the papal inquisition in Rome was expanding and reinforcing its presence in France due to various heresies there, of the Cathars and the Waldensians, imposing stricter supervision upon those who deviated from the church's teachings. To that end, the pope appointed more inquisitors. The Dominican Stephen of Bourbon (1180–1261) received an early *mandato apostolico* in 1235. He set up base in the monastery of his order in Lyon, whence he supervised the rural areas to detect the presence of superstitions, heresies and demonic forces. While touring the Dombes region directly north of Lyon around 1250, he heard local peasants speak during confession about the unusual cult of a saint called Guinefort. He wrote down the stories he heard in a Latin report (Lecoy de la Marche 1877). He added this to his vast personal collection of exempla, the *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus,* which he used as material for his sermons, as warnings to the faithful against doctrinal errors. The main gist of the story that underlies the cult is as follows:

The lord and his wife lived in a fortified house near Neuville-les-Dames. Once while they were out, and while the nanny was otherwise occupied, a big snake

entered the room to strike their baby boy. But the lord's dog, a greyhound, was there and attacked the snake. The dog was wounded but managed to kill the reptile. During the fight, the cradle was knocked over, covering the baby, and shielding it from sight. As the dog was licking his wounds with bloodied mouth, the parents returned and mistakenly thought the dog had eaten the baby. In one blow the lord killed the dog with his sword. But then they found the baby alive under the cradle, and in the corner a dead snake covered with dog bites. It was only then that they understood the heroism of their dog. To honor the brave animal, they buried it in a well in front of the castle, covered the grave with stones and marked the spot with memorial trees. Not much later, the castle was destroyed through God's will.

Despite the disappearance of the castle, the rural population preserved a vivid memory of this extraordinary story about a brave and innocent animal martyr. Somehow the name Guinefort came to be associated with the beast, and people started to venerate it. Due to his role in the story, Guinefort began to be seen as a savior of children in peril and of sickly or feeble children, although the healing he brought did not come easily. The necessary rituality that emerged was not that of ordinary Catholic devotion. Apart from the fact that the veneration concerned a dog, inquisitor Stephen of Bourbon was especially intrigued by the strange rituals surrounding the cult, and he began to immerse himself in the case. Successive generations of ritual specialists, 'witch-like' old women, taught visitors to the shrine how to establish meaningful contact with the 'saint.' Rituals that Stephen of Bourbon noted included dunking a child nine times in the nearby Chalaronne river, tossing the baby back and forth between the mother and the old woman, offering salt, hanging pieces of clothing in the trees and hammering nails into the trees. But what struck him most was the ritual prescription for mothers to leave their sick baby fully naked between two of the memorial trees, place burning candles beside the child's head and then leave, go out of visual and hearing reach, until the candles were fully burned. In the meantime, the fauns and demons of the forest supposedly decided whether or not to take the child's illness from it. The involvement of fauns confirmed the superstitious and pagan character of the cult for Stephen of Bourbon. But the risky rituals sometimes caused the death of children thus left behind. The inquisitor no longer had any doubt as to his duty in this case: the cult had to be eradicated. He had the dog's bones dug up and burned, together with the sacred memorial trees which were chopped down. After the bonfire, he summoned the locals to the site and warned them earnestly that anyone who would ever support this superstition again, would be punished harshly. Stephen of Bourbon felt victorious and presumed that the destruction wrought and his speech were sufficient to stamp out the cult.

Despite the fearsome reputation of the inquisition in relation to heresy in those parts of France, the people continued their practices in honor of Guinefort. The healing of sick children more than outweighed the admonitions of church. Six centuries later, Schmitt found proof in the diocesan archives that a bishop who had made a pastoral visit in 1826 had encountered people who still venerated Guinefort

there, while learned clergy and lay historians at the time debated whether this saint had been a man or a dog. Stories and practices continued up to the 1930s, still facilitated by an old enchantress. Not only historians were puzzled: over the centuries, the church authorities failed to uphold their rigorous ban, as they permitted a Guinefort chapel to be built at the site; the chapel was still standing in 1632.

All that remains today in terms of visible objects is the 'sacred' forest. It is still named after the saint and is situated along the D7 road southeast of Châtillon-sur-Chalaronne. The archeological annex in Schmitt's book mentions the possibility of remains on the site of a former thirteenth-century *castrum*, a castle or a fortified dwelling, as described in the story. The forest is easy to trace on Google Maps. The *Bois de Guinefort* is indicated with a marker on the map as one zooms in. To my surprise, it contains a link which describes the site as a 'religious destination,' whatever Google Maps may mean by that. It is probably a reference to the continuing story of Guinefort.

Schmitt's in-depth study focuses on a specific 'folkloristic' practice over a very long period of time, in a very limited geographical space. He was alerted to its existence only through the lucky find of a document that, apart from the legal content, also mentioned the rituals practiced there and the legend upon which the case was based. Schmitt was able to unscramble the story, to distinguish old templates from ancient exempla, and biblical or patristic topoi from thirteenth-century or newer elements of the story. As it turns out, the story is a bricolage of later medieval accretions to an archetypical Indo-European storyline (Marzolph 2020: 45–48). This storyline, a primal legend, is about animals who save children, and it can be traced back to India's Sanskrit literature, at least as far back as the sixth century BCE. The original legend featured a mongoose, not a dog, as the savior. Later, in the eight century, an Arab version appeared, and translations of this circulated in Greek, Hebrew and Latin, and in the twelfth century also in Old French. Moreover, there were other popular saints called Guinefort, including the martyr Guniforto in Pavia, Abbot Guinefort in Bourges and Bishop Millefort, also known as Guinefort, in Picardy. Schmitt found no fewer than 59 sites where a saint called Guinefort was venerated in Italy and France, in all sorts of variations. The cult of 'our' Saint Guinefort was brought from the original shrine in Pavia to the Lyon region by monks, and subsequently became associated with the wondrous dog. With its specific local interpretation and rituals, the forbidden cult was able to survive in this rural area, where it still existed in the same location in the twentieth century, albeit in a somewhat modified way.

What struck me in this book in 1981 was Schmitt's broad approach and his use of a wide variety of auxiliary and complementary disciplines to unravel the tangle of folktales, legends and hagiographies, as well as the attendant variations, mutations, confusions, misinterpretations and fantasies that were related over the centuries with this weird canine myth. Apart from historical analysis, with which he was familiar through training, Schmitt applied elements of ethnology, anthropology, archeology, onomastics, etymology, topography, iconography, chronology,

cartography, mythology, folkloristics, and hagiography in his study. He went *ad fontes*, to the original sources, but also did contemporary ethnographic fieldwork. This combination immediately appealed to me at the time, and it stimulated me to include more of these subsidiary fields in my own study. It felt as if I had encountered an older and wiser brother with whom I was united in professional kinship, although I actually never met him personally.

Rereading parts of Schmitt's work today, I realize that the book has aged somewhat. The unreflective designation of religious practices as *folklorique*, for example, has become outdated. Nor does the structuralist approach, so characteristic of French anthropology and of the *Annales* at the time, fully satisfy any longer. The nearly binary opposition that is implied between learned church culture and popular culture or 'folklore,' and the strong connection that is made with feudalism, feel too rigid and schematic to me. Admittedly, Schmitt's book is a splendid expression of the *Annales* creed—the *longue durée*. But at the same time, there is a huge gap in the six centuries that it spans: there is hardly any information on the period between 1250 and the nineteenth century. This is of course hardly Schmitt's fault, and we must instead congratulate him that his fluke find in the archives allowed him to write such a special study.

In the *New York Review of Books* (April 30, 1981), the American medievalist Lester Little compared Schmitt's study to Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's *Montaillou* (1975) and Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* (1976), no less, as these two bestsellers were also based on accidental finds in inquisition archives. Little figured that *Le Saint Lévrier* could also become an influential model study of preindustrial culture in Europe. But as Schmitt operated differently, in an unpolished methodological, almost 'technical' way, his book never gained a similar public success and influence. Stephen of Bourbon's own story fared rather better, because in 1987 it was turned into the French film *Le Moine et la sorcière* (The Sorceress) by Suzanne Schiffman.

Since then, as things sometimes go, I had my own fluke find: a file in the archives of the Roman inquisition. It dated not from the Middle Ages but from 'my' own twentieth century, but it was no less extraordinary. In the meantime, I too had learned to apply various disciplines and I tried to 'polish' the narrative a little more thoroughly than Schmitt did, to reach out to a wider audience, in particular to the faith community of the Dutch diocese of Breda, which was itself involved in and traumatized by the events. They were still more or less unaware of what had happened in the village of Welberg when a very popular apparitional and stigmatist cult there was wiped out in 1951 by the Vatican in one fell swoop. Again, an historian-ethnologist had his opportunity to bring a surprising story to light (Margry 2021).

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Robert Wilson, *Barnum: An American Life*

Moira Marsh

Robert Wilson, journalist, biographer, and editor of the Phi Beta Kappa magazine, *American Scholar*, has produced a new biography of P.T. Barnum, one of the most well-known Americans both in his day and even in ours. Barnum (1810–1891) is best-known today as the co-creator of the Barnum & Bailey Circus, but he also had a long and varied career as a showman, impresario, newspaper columnist, best-selling author, lecturer, builder, and even city mayor. The other thing he is chiefly remembered for today is the proverbial saying, "There's a sucker born every minute," something that he never actually said.

Barnum wrote several autobiographies and has also been the subject of several biographies, including one attributed to "one of his interviewers" but which I suspect he also wrote himself in 1889. He was a global celebrity during his lifetime and has attracted scholarly attention for the past century because of his important contributions to the making of American popular culture. Wilson goes further, suggesting that he "embodied some of America's worst impulses, but also many of its best" (Wilson 2019: 8). As a folklorist and humor scholar, I was drawn to this figure not because of the apocryphal elements in his story, but because he was both a practical joker and the victim of an extraordinary practical joke that shaped the course of his life.

In Chapter One, "The Richest Child in Town," Wilson tells the story of this "strangely cruel and astonishingly drawn-out" practical joke which Barnum was subjected to for most of his childhood (16). From the age of four, his grandfather perpetually told him about "Ivy Island," supposedly a rich tract of farmland that had been bought in his name. For years, the rest of his family and others in the

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village assured him that this gift made him the richest child in town. Young Barnum was finally taken to see his inheritance with his own eyes at the age of twelve. Finally, after struggling to cross a swamp, attacked by hornets and black snakes, he beheld a few acres of muddy, worthless land. "The truth rushed upon me," Barnum writes in his autobiography. "I had been made a fool of by all our neighborhood for more than half a dozen years. My rich 'Ivy Island' was an inaccessible piece of barren land, not worth a farthing, and all my visions of future wealth and greatness vanished into thin air" (Barnum 2000, 34). Barnum recounts what happened next:

> We got back to the meadow, and found my father and men mowing away lustily.
> 'Well, how do you like your property?' asked my father, with the most imperturbable gravity.
> 'I would sell it pretty cheap,' I responded, holding down my head.
> A tremendous roar of laughter bursting from all the workmen showed that they were in on the secret .... and from that time during the next five years I was continually reminded of the valuable property known as 'Ivy Island."' (35)

This story is striking in several respects. The trick is, as Wilson notes, both "strangely cruel and astonishingly drawn out," even within the annals of practical joking. Wilson is surely correct to suggest that it served as the psychological force that drove Barnum's "outsize eagerness to enrich himself" (Wilson 2019: 15) for the rest of his days. In addition, it seems to me that it was also the forerunner of his lifetime devotion to what he called the art of humbug.

Practical joking was not out of the ordinary at that time and place: Barnum recounts that both sides of his family were full of practical jokers, and Wilson argues that it was the common pastime of the region in those days:

> Cuteness [shrewdness], tall tales, and the well-planned joke were the place's stock-in-trade, and even the victims of the more outlandish schemes easily overlooked the tinge of cruelty often attached to them. Given the small size of the village, the chances were good that everyone would have ample opportunity to be on one side of a practical joke or the other. So the pressure was always on to be a good sport—and to bide one's time (10).

So, there was nothing unusual in the Barnum family playing practical jokes on each other and even on their young children. What was unusual was the extreme length of the Ivy Island deception before the target was let in on the joke. Parents commonly deceive their young children for years with ficts about the existence of Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, or the tooth fairy, but these stories are not considered practical jokes; instead, they are a kind of rite of passage common to all or most children in a society. The Ivy Island deception was unique to young Barnum alone. The joke originated with his grandfather, but was supported and amplified by his parents, other relatives, and neighbors in the village, not for a few hours or

days, but for years. Even allowing for differences between the ethics of joking in early nineteenth-century Connecticut and the early twenty-first century, this trick severely stretches the limits of playfulness.

The boy faced a dilemma. Since he was a minor child, his tormentors outranked him; it takes a certain amount of power to be able to raise objections to jokes, even when they are at your own expense, and even when they cross the bounds. When the jokers are one's closest family—all of whom are in on the joke—it is unthinkable to complain about this treatment. Peer pressure doesn't begin to describe the situation. Submission to the group's definition of the situation was the only viable option. Instead of objecting, young Barnum played along … and bided his time. In his autobiography, he explained that he could "more heartily laugh at this practical joke" (Barnum 2000: 35) because he was able to exploit Ivy Island many years later to guarantee the business loan that started him on the path to success as a showman (Wilson 2019: 53).

The psychological impact on a child of such an extended parental deception can well be imagined. The alleged riches of Ivy Island had been a part of young Barnum's reality for virtually his entire life. When the story was revealed to be a lie, the boy faced a psychological dilemma in addition to the social one. For a child to learn that those he loves most in the world, and who he thought loved him, have treated him cruelly creates an intolerable internal conflict. Barnum found a way out of this double bind—the necessity of acknowledging the lie along with the need to believe in the goodness of one's parents—not by rejecting his family, but by proving that the story was not a lie after all. For the rest of his life, Barnum devoted prodigious energy to proving that he was, indeed, the richest boy in town.

The effects of this psychological imprinting were lifelong. Wilson recounts how Barnum corresponded with Samuel Clemens in the 1870s, when he was already a well-known and wealthy man:

> Barnum persisted in sending Clemens long letters describing the latest efforts in his travelling show. … Often the thrust of his description was not just the variety and magnificence of what Barnum had put into the shows, but how much they had cost him to put on. Clearly Barnum seemed to feel that Clemens would be impressed by these large expenditures, and just as clearly Clemens was not. These letters don't just feel obtuse; they feel more than a little embarrassing (Wilson 2019: 248).

These letters to Clemens were not an aberration; even a superficial reading of Barnum's voluminous literary output reveals his habits of ostentatious spending and of boasting about his wealth. These traits are embarrassing, but understandable, once we recognize that the real audience of these protestations of wealth was not the external one, but an internal one. Barnum the man was constantly proving to his internal, twelve-year-old self that he was indeed the richest child in town, just as his grandfather and his parents had always said he was.

The third aspect of the Ivy Island episode on Barnum's life is his identity as a practical joker and his alter ego as the "King of Humbugs" (Wilson 2019: 50). In the very first chapter of his autobiography, Barnum describes his genealogy as a practical joker. "My grandfather was decidedly a wag," he writes. "He was a practical joker. He would go farther, wait longer, work harder and contrive deeper, to carry out a practical joke, than for anything else under heaven. In this one particular, as well as in many others, I am almost sorry to say I am his counterpart" (10). Since practical joking was a Barnum family tradition, it is not surprising that he followed his grandfather's example in this regard. Moreover, this assumed identity also served as further psychological defense against the persistent inner voice that wished to blame his family for cruelly tricking and laughing at him, by asserting over and over that practical joking is an acceptable pastime.

The relationship between a practical joker and his or her target is replicated on a larger scale in Barnum's public persona as the King of Humbugs. The word humbug—a little old-fashioned today—is defined today as sham, fraud, deception, or nonsense; in an earlier era, it could also mean a trick or practical joke, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. To this day, Barnum is associated with hucksterism, hyperbole, hoax, and fraud. He made a fortune by selling wonders to the public that were either greatly exaggerated or outright hoaxes, and by exploiting the power of advertising and the media to draw attention and paying customers. Wilson recounts in detail how on numerous occasions he even planted accusations of fraud about his own acts to arouse controversy and with it, even more publicity. It seems he would do or say almost anything to draw a crowd and was spectacularly successful in doing so.

Just as most practical jokes are designed to end when the target is let in on the joke, so in his career Barnum made a regular practice of publicly revealing his humbugs. In his autobiography, the first edition of which appeared in 1855, Barnum reveals his own public humbugs. A few years later, he wrote another book dedicated to surveying the humbugs of the world and helping to protect the public from its more unscrupulous forms, while also persuading them that his own humbugs were entertaining and harmless (Barnum 1866). He argued that his customers never had to pay very much, and always got their money's worth even if it was not precisely what the hype had led them to expect. By these means, he was treating the public like friends that he had fooled with a harmless practical joke. The relationship between the showman and the public was not purely commercial, but a sort of game in which everyone was let in on the joke and could become a part of the fun (Wilson 2019: 7). Jokers who reveal their trickery open themselves up to retaliation from their victims, which, ironically, serves as a sign of good faith after a playful enactment of bad faith.

However, if practical jokes are the template with which the public career of P.T. Barnum is judged, troubling questions remain. For me as a scholar of practical joking, Barnum's story magnifies some of the persistent and troubling issues that this genre is heir to. Barnum proudly claimed practical joking as the central part of

his genealogy, but even he had some ambivalence about his favorite pastime. "Nothing that I can conceive of delights me so much as playing off one of those dangerous things," he writes. While they have afforded him many "hearty laughs," he says he has also often "regretted this propensity, which was born in me, and will doubtless continue" (Barnum 2000: 10). Effectively, he was saying he couldn't help himself.

Barnum's ambivalence is also Wilson's and ours. Wilson admires his subject, but there are times when he also finds his actions embarrassing, hard to understand, or morally reprehensible. Barnum has become a caricature today, the con man who supposedly gave us the phrase, "there's a sucker born every minute." Wilson reports that there is no evidence that Barnum ever said this, but this bit of apocrypha sums up his reputation as a cynical huckster who used deception and fast talk to cheat the public (Wilson 2019: 3). The reality, his biographer insists, is more complex. Similarly, Barnum himself had to confront the realization that his loving grandfather, the one who carried him around as an infant and fed him lumps of sugar, had also cynically tricked him for the amusement of the rest of the family—and the whole neighborhood. The cruelty is undeniable, but also unfathomable.

Barnum's story also arouses persistent questions for me, as a folklorist who has studied the social life of practical jokes. Practical jokes and other humbugs arouse ambivalent, contradictory feelings. They are simultaneously fun and cruel, untrue and amusing, crafted bad faith closely followed by shows of good faith. How can we reconcile these opposites? Should we attempt it? One might label Barnum a trickster in real life, that is, a figure who is ambiguous by nature, but that would skirt the problem. This trickster is no figure of myth, whose antics may be viewed from a safe distance as amusement or instruction. The reality, as Wilson found, is both more interesting and more complex.

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Tzvetan Todorov, "Les hommes-récits"

Ulrich Marzolph

In one of his first books, *Poétique de la prose* (1971), the Bulgarian-French author (historian, philosopher, literary critic, sociologist etc.) Tzvetan Todorov (1939–2017) published a short essay, originally written in 1967, titled "Les hommes-récits." The essay was subsequently translated into English as "Narrative-Men," into German as "Die Erzähl-Menschen," and into many other languages. In this essay, Todorov discusses the status of characters and their narratives in *The Thousand and One Nights* (henceforth: the *Nights*) and, to a minor extent, in *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*, written by Polish author Jan Potocki (1761–1815), a work whose structure overlaps with that of the *Nights*. Todorov suggests a critical reading of the function of tales in the *Nights* that is as simple as it is striking, since it identifies a fairly obvious characteristic whose pivotal importance for an adequate assessment of Middle Eastern storytelling can hardly be overestimated. Rather than discussing the significant impact of Todorov's essay in the fields of comparative literature and semiotics, my interest as a folklorist specializing in Middle Eastern narrative culture relates primarily to storytelling techniques in the *Nights* and other collections of the Middle Eastern literatures compiled in Arabic and Persian. Although Todorov restricts his discussion to the *Nights*, his insights are relevant far beyond, as they open up a window to understanding basic features of the literatures concerned that are influential in numerous other literary works.

Todorov introduces his essay with a quote from Henry James's (d. 1916) famous essay *The Art of Fiction* (1884): "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?" Critiquing James's statement as a "pure case of egocentricity presenting itself as universality" (Todorov 1977: 67),

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Todorov points to literary works in which "the actions are not there to 'illustrate' character but in which, on the contrary, the characters are subservient to the action" (67). Of these literary works, he counts *The Arabian Nights* as "among the most famous examples." Most of his following considerations focus on tales from the *Nights*, leading Todorov to identify fundamental characteristics of the *Nights* that he takes as representative for Middle Eastern storytelling in general. His considerations are well grounded and result in numerous densely formulated authoritative statements: "All character traits are immediately causal; as soon as they appear, they provoke an action" (68); "a character is a potential story that is the story of his life." He culminates by asserting: "We are in the realm of narrative-men" (70).

Once Torodov has established the immediate, in fact indispensable connection between characters and their stories, he at first proceeds to illustrate the consequence of characters acting in or introduced into a narrative telling their own narratives, leading him to discuss the narrative device of embedding (70–73). This device implies the existence of both a larger embedding and one or several shorter embedded tales, both of which constitute integral parts of a larger plot whose subsequent development is influenced, if not determined by the embedded tale that is introduced at a specific moment in the embedding plot (73). Concluding that "the act of narrating" in the *Nights* "is the mainspring of the action" leads Todorov to determine the most decisive characteristic of the *Nights* in that "narrating equals living" (73) and consequently, "absence of narrative, death" (74). This fundamental insight is further detailed: characters telling an embedded tale may die as soon as the tale they had to tell is no longer necessary to teach the characters acting in the embedding tale (74); furthermore, if "loquacity saves from death, curiosity leads to it" (75). In the concluding passages of his essay, Todorov finishes by shortly discussing the connection between a maxim and the related narrative (77), by pointing to the "incessant proliferation of narratives in this marvelous story-machine" (78), and by qualifying each and every translation of the *Nights* as something special, since no translator "has been content with a simple translation merely faithful to the original; each translator has added and suppressed stories" (78).

Todorov's essay is written in an extremely dense style, and in some way it might be easier for critics to single out his less important findings than to highlight significant statements of greater relevance. For me as a folklorist, reading Todorov's "Narrative-men" is a revelation because he succeeds in ascertaining the unquestioned given as the overt mechanism crucial for understanding the *Nights*, and, in many ways, Middle Eastern storytelling altogether. The device of "narrating equals living" lies at the very core of the *Nights*, as the narrator Shahrazād only manages to survive by enticing the murderous ruler to listen to her tales night after night until his wrath wears away, enabling the collection to conclude in a fairy-tale "happily ever after," notably without the narrator disclosing her strategem. The very same device is also exemplified in what modern research, most aptly voiced by Aboubakr Chraïbi (2008), has identified as the old "core corpus" of the *Nights*, i.e. the body of

tales documented in the collection's oldest preserved manuscript dating from the fifteenth century.

This manuscript served as the basis for the first European translation of the *Nights*, Antoine Galland's *Les Mille et une nuit* (1704–17). Since the manuscript is, however, incomplete, Galland later complemented and, in fact, completed the final volumes of his *Nights* with tales collected from the oral performance of the talented young Syrian Christian storyteller Ḥannā Diyāb. Incidentally, Todorov cites the tales contributed by Diyāb with the same degree of "authenticity" as those of the old Arabic manuscript, thus unwittingly putting tales from early eighteenth-century Syrian Christian oral tradition on an equal footing with those from ancient written tradition, although the latter may or may not to some extent also have been influenced by "folklore." Todorov's application of the (unreferenced) assessment that "folklore is characterized by the repetition of the same story" (Todorov 1977: 73) to the *Nights* even appears to imply that he regarded the collection itself as "folklore." But that is a different story he does not detail.

In virtually all of the tales of the old "core corpus," the characters, when threatened with death, save their lives (or that of another character) by telling their (or a) story. This feature not only documents the supreme reign of the mentioned narrative device but also proves the *Nights* to be not just a haphazard compilation of tales arbitrarily chosen for superficial entertainment. Rather, the repeated feature betrays the careful and conscious hand of an author (or several authors) who chose the initial tales of the "core corpus" to link with Shahrazād's own situation of saving her life through storytelling. The fact that the device is lost after the "core corpus" rather results from the vicissitudes of history, as incomplete manuscripts of the *Nights* were completed with stories of the most diverse genres to fulfill the collection's promise of a thousand and one nights of storytelling. In addition to linking the embedded tales told by Shahrazād to her own embedding tale, i.e. the frame story of the *Nights*, the device "narrating equals living" also establishes a link between the *Nights* and the ancient and influential Arabic narrative of Khurāfa, a pseudo-historical character who is said to have lived during the time of the Prophet Muḥammad and whose name over time came to acquire the generic meaning of "tale of the marvelous and strange" (Marzolph and Van Leeuwen 2004: vol. 2, pp. 616–617). Khurāfa, not mentioned by Todorov, is thus the quintessential "narrative-man," the terminological personification of narrative in unity with its narrator. The narrative Khurāfa tells is his own, as he recalls how one night he was taken prisoner by three demons. As the demons discussed what to do with him, he was subsequently ransomed by three men who told the demons a "tale of the marvelous and strange" each in return for the prisoner's life. Incidentally, a close adaptation of Khurāfa's tale is the first story Shahrazād tells in the *Nights*, the tale of "The Merchant and the *Jinni*." Here, the traveling merchant unintentionally slays a demon's son and when about to be killed in retaliation is ransomed by three old men telling a marvelous story each in return for a third of his life. Dutch historian

of literature Mia Gerhardt used the term "ransom tale" to account for the working of the crucial device Todorov later identified.

Furthermore, the embedded tales told by the additionally introduced characters are not just random tales of previous events. Without any exception, the embedded tales treat "marvelous and strange" events whose further course usually leads to the narrating character's meeting with that of the embedding tale. "Tales of the marvelous and the strange" are thus the fundamental genre. Their introduction not only serves to propel the action but also reminds the audience of belief in the omnipotent capacities of God as well as the inevitable working of fate. Interestingly, fate, although predestined, is never mandatory in the tales, as in the "folkloric" dimension there appear to be multiple versions of predestined events whose exact course can be influenced by active intervention on the part of the concerned characters. Even a character's minimal individual engagement may decide which one of the predestined courses his or her career will take.

Todorov's essay is also groundbreaking in discussing the generic feature of the frame story. This feature is, in fact, essential for numerous Middle Eastern collections of stories, some of which made a decisive contribution to world literature. The Arabic *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, essentially the adapted translation of a Persian adaptation of the Sanskrit *Panchatantra* (Five [Books of] Wisdom), is a collection of animal tales and fables narrated by the animal characters of its frame story to illustrate their differing arguments. Prior to modernity, the collection was translated into about 40 different languages and had a lasting impact on the European literatures of the Middle Ages and early modernity. The Persian *Sendbād-nāme* (Book of Sendbād), whose European versions are known under the label "The Seven Sages," is constituted by a frame tale in which a young man slandered by a malevolent woman is about to be executed for his alleged misdemeanor, and the embedding tales are told either by the king's viziers in defense of his son, or by the slandering female character. Both of the aforementioned collections belong to a genre commonly named "mirror for princes," implying a pedagogical intention of the embedded tales to instruct and distinguish right from wrong. Similarly, the *Nights* has been termed a "mirror for merchants," as many of the characters in the tales are merchants, and their adventures serve to illustrate the ethics of merchants that presumably constituted the main audience for the tales in their original context. The "Book of the Parrot," best known through the Persian adaptation of the Indian *Shukasaptati* (70 [Tales of a] Parrot), the *Ṭuṭi-nāme*, again introduces another specific frame story that once more exemplifies the main device "narrating equals living" identified by Todorov. While her husband is away on business, a young woman asks her two parrots for advice whether she should give in to temptation and visit a prospective lover. The male parrot scolds her for her immoral intentions and is killed, both because of its straightforward admonishment and because it does not clothe them in illustrative narratives. The female parrot, instead, offers to let the woman decide, warning her not to fall into the trap of doing something she might later regret, such as it happened to the characters of the tales he knows, since "regret

of things past is of no use." Once the woman's curiosity is aroused, she requests the parrot to tell the tale alluded to, and when the tale finishes the night is over so that the woman is kept from giving in to temptation. In this manner, numerous Middle Eastern collections of tales are constituted by a specific embedding frame story that is, as a rule, filled with embedded tales whose content supports the narrator's and the frame story's argument. The frame stories of the Middle Eastern collections are thus not just mere frames to be filled with entertaining stories to pass the time, such as those of Boccaccio's *Decamerone* or Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (on a superficial level, although they are more meaningful when carefully read).

Instead, they serve as a narrative device to unite a universe of tales under a common umbrella, as both the embedding and the embedded tales share a common and clearly defined goal. Whereas the previously discussed device of "narrating equals living" is mainly germane to the *Nights* and similar collections in which a character's life is threatened, such as the *Sendbād-nāme* and its various versions, Todorov's discussion of the frame story is rudimentary and could have been much more elaborate, particularly in view of the fact that the latter device was tremendously influential in numerous national literatures. Read as a stimulating initiative, however, his discussion proves to be as insightful as inspiring for an adequate assessment of one of the impactful mechanisms at work in the Middle Eastern literatures.

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Archer Taylor, *The Proverb*

Wolfgang Mieder

There is no doubt that the American folklorist and philologist Archer Taylor (1890–1973) was a scholarly legend in his own time. Versed in numerous European languages, he published his comparative studies in various countries and was an eager participant at international conferences when traveling was still more challenging and time-consuming than today. His vast scholarship includes detailed monographs on early German literature, ballads, riddles, and gestures. There are also book-length bibliographies and dozens of journal articles dealing with various verbal folklore genres. As a distinguished Professor of German and Folklore at the University of California at Berkeley, he established a vast network of folklorists in the United States and far beyond, influencing colleagues and students alike with his far-reaching productivity that in turn inspired them to follow in his footsteps. He was indeed an internationally acclaimed folklorist, but his unsurpassed fame rests upon his pioneering work in paremiography and paremiology, that is the collection and study of proverbs, proverbial expressions, proverbial comparisons, twin formulas, and wellerisms. Starting in 1920, he published dozens of articles, notes, and book reviews on proverbial matters that appeared during five decades (Mieder 2009: II, 809–815), with his unsurpassed *magnum opus* being his exquisite treatise on *The Proverb* (1931). It remains to this day *the* standard work in proverb studies and continues to be referenced by paremiologists throughout the world.

What has made this small book of merely 223 pages that sold for just $2.00 such a classic study? After all, Taylor wrote it at the relatively young age of forty-one and during the time that his wife Alice Jones had passed away leaving him to fend for himself and their three children. Knowing this, one can speculate that immersing

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himself into the challenging project of surveying the multifaceted world of proverbs was a way to deal with his grief. When the slender black volume appeared at the Harvard University Press, who could possibly have prophesied that it would change and advance paremiology henceforth? Strange as it might sound, a considerable amount of its lasting value lies in the fact that it raised a lot of questions und unsolved problems that at least to a considerable degree have been solved by now. In other words, the book encouraged scholars and students to go beyond the master paremiologist who provided them with significant suggestions for further research. But also, and this point is very important indeed, the book is free of any sophisticated scholarly jargon. Taylor would have none of that! He formulated his insights and knowledge into clear and readable prose, making his erudite book a pleasure to read. His incredible communicative skill certainly helped to make this book an international phenomenon. He had two earlier attempts to present a comprehensible description of the world of proverbs to serve as models, namely Richard Chenevix Trench's (1807–1886) *Proverbs and Their Lessons* (1853) and F. Edward Hulme's (1841–1909) *Proverb Lore* (1902). Both of them continue to be informative presentations in their readable accounts filled with proverbs in English translation from many cultures and languages. But Taylor, polyglot that he was, did not shy away from citing proverbs in numerous foreign languages throughout his book. Even though he provides English translations, the fact that he cites proverbs in their original languages shows once and for all that paremiology and folklore are of reginal, national, and international relevance.

Archer Taylor begins his book with a paragraph that is one of the most quoted statements in all of proverb scholarship:

> The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking; and should we fortunately combine in a single definition all the essential elements and give each the proper emphasis, we should not even then have a touchstone. An incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not. Hence no definition will enable us to identify positively a sentence as proverbial. Those who do not speak a language can never recognize all its proverbs, and similarly much that is truly proverbial escapes us in Elizabethan and older English. Let us be content with recognizing that a proverb is a saying current among the folk. At least so much of a definition is indisputable, and we shall see and weigh the significance of other elements later. (Taylor 1931: 3)

Indeed, Taylor then spends the next 220 pages talking about this "incommunicable quality" that makes a certain statement a proverb. As a scholarly observation, it has become proverbial among paremiologists, and no matter what sophisticated and theoretical proverb definitions have been developed during the past decades, they all have their limitations. A simple working definition that I have used with my students could be that "a proverb is a concise statement of an apparent truth that has currency among the folk." I owe this to my doctor father Stuart A. Gallacher

(1906–1977), who was a student of Archer Taylor when he taught at the University of Chicago. This makes me, in a way, Taylor's grandson, something that I enjoy mentioning with much respect and admiration for the doyen of proverb studies.

There are not many books that have guided scholars from all corners of the world in their proverb studies. Taylor's *The Proverb* is without doubt a truly classical work. In short but detailed chapters it presents an illuminating overview of the fascinating field of paremiology. The first section deals with the complex origin of proverbs, with the individual chapters covering the problems of definition, the aspects of metaphorical proverbs, the various proverbial types and structures, the important matter of variants, the relationship between proverbs and folk narratives, the appearance of proverbs in folk-verses, the vexing question of proverb authorship, the fascinating issue of proverb translations, the diffusion of Biblical proverbs, and the survival of proverbs from classical times in translation. All of this is discussed in accessible prose with fitting examples as well as explanatory and bibliographical notes. Suggestions for further research also appear, and they have encouraged much further work ever since. The second section deals with the content of proverbs, explaining that they refer to customs and superstitions, historical and cultural matters, legal concepts, ethnic or national stereotypes, meteorological signs, medical advice, and prophecies of various types. All of this is exemplified by proverbs from various languages and cultures, making these pages a most interesting excursion into proverbial wisdom. As one would expect, the third section addresses primarily such stylistic matters as language, metaphor, personification, parallelism, rhyme, etc. This is followed by a discussion of dialogue and epigrammatic proverbs, national, ethnic, and ethical traits, and the use and function of proverbs in literature. Finally, Taylor provides a fourth section with detailed analyses of proverbial expressions, proverbial comparisons, and wellerisms.

Every page of this book is filled with examples from different languages for which Taylor often offers short explanatory comments. His informed observations are usually on the mark, but he is also quick to add that more work is needed to give definitive answers about the origin, dissemination, and meaning of certain expressions. He is perfectly honest in admitting that there are plenty of proverbs and proverbial expressions for which he cannot provide satisfactory explanations, to wit: "The phrase *to call a spade a spade* may allude to a spayed dog, and possibly we can find support for this explanation in the synonymous Italian *to call a cat a cat* (chimar gatta gatta). On the other hand, the German *to show him what a rake is* (einem zeigen was eine Harke ist) suggests that 'spade' means a garden implement" (Taylor 1931: 192–193). This kind of scholarly comment has led scholars again and again to go on their own hunting expeditions for the history of individual phrases, making this book a treasure trove for future scholarship to this day. Taylor's speculation about this proverbial expression is quite vague and also partially wrong. It definitely has nothing to do with spaying a dog, but the thought that "spade" might simply refer to a garden tool is quite appropriate. In any case, his short remark developed into a major research project for me that resulted in my monograph entitled *"Call a*

Spade a Spade": From Classical Phrase to Racial Slur (2002). This is but one example showing how Taylor's *The Proverb* remains a highly influential book for scholars and students alike who wish to till the rich fields of paremiology. It should be read cover to cover by anyone who wants to be thoroughly introduced to proverb studies.

That book could really not be improved upon, but one year after Archer Taylor's death I was in the fortunate position as a still young paremiologist to propose to colleagues at the VI. International Congress for Folk-Narrative Research in June 1974 at Helsinki that I put together fifteen major proverb essays by Taylor as somewhat of a supplement. It appeared as no. 216 of the Folklore Fellows Communications one year later. The book contains a rather short but intriguing article on "'Audi, Vide, Tace,' and the Three Monkeys" that Taylor had published in *Fabula* in 1957 (Taylor 1975: 165–171). As so often with my own work, this essay inspired me many years later to write another monograph with the tile *"Nichts sehen, nichts hören, nichts sagen": Die drei weisen Affen in Kunst, Literatur, Medien und Karikaturen* (2005). And on it goes for me and others. Whoever is looking for a worthwhile proverb project need only turn to Taylor's writings that include possible research projects galore.

Archer Taylor, whom I unfortunately never met in person, is without doubt one of the three folkloric heroes who have influenced my own scholarly activity. There was my dear German friend Lutz Röhrich (1922–2006) who invited me as my senior to co-author our book *Sprichwort* (1977) as somewhat of a German equivalent to Taylor's book. And, of course, there was my close friend Alan Dundes (1934–2005), whom Taylor brought to Berkeley and who invited me at my young age of thirty-six to be guest professor at that renowned university. These three have influenced and continue to inspire my own work. As I remember them almost daily, I am reminded of Bernard of Chartres (fl. 1100) observation "We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants." I see myself as a dwarf standing on the broad shoulders of these three giants. My admiration for Archer Taylor went so far that I resisted for decades to write my own comprehensive book on proverbs, even though Alan Dundes repeatedly told me that I should do this during the late 1980s. I kept telling him that I was too young to undertake such a project and that Taylor's book should remain the unparalleled classic work in paremiology. Yet Dundes would not give up pushing me to write that book. During my annual meetings with him in California he kept pestering me about this matter, and I can still hear him say, "Wolfgang, when will you finally write that book!" Well, his persistence bore fruit, and I finally published *Proverbs: A Handbook* (2004). On July 6, 2004, Dundes wrote to me enthusiastically as only he could be: "The *Proverbs* handbook has arrived. Congratulations. It is a monumental achievement. If it were in inexpensive paperback, I would require it as a text for my big class [his introduction to folklore class would have up to 400 students!]. It should prove to be a model for ALL genre handbooks in the future. You packed so much important information in it. It is a delight to read it. It should be in absolutely every college and university library EVERYWHERE in the world. A truly great achievement and there is no one else

who could have written it." So much praise from my best friend who had succeeded in making me write this book at sixty years of age. I was ready then, and I am so happy that the book came out a year before Alan Dundes passed away unexpectedly.

So, I am still glad that I published the book in time to satisfy my well-meaning friend. He knew that I did not write it to compete or even push aside Archer Taylor's magnificent book. Never! While working on it, I was so very much aware of the fact that I was standing on Taylor's shoulders as I benefited from all the publications by international paremiologists that had appeared since the 1930s. Perhaps Dundes was correct in convincing me to publish this book not to surpass Taylor's, but to stand next to it as an addendum written with appropriate respect for the true paremiological master. The two books on the proverb are quite different but also similar, they are readable and without obscure jargon, and they are meant to enlighten scholars and students alike—also the general reading public—about the wealth of proverbial wisdom. If dreams could become true, I would so much enjoy hearing what Archer Taylor might have thought of my book that could not have been written without him. Maybe he would even utter the anti-proverb "Like grandfather, like grandson!"

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Rereading Shah Mahmad “Kukanak’s” Tale of Melon City

Margaret A. Mills

One can never read the same story, or book, twice. Every reading is a new “text.” For some time, I am in a belated (and ongoing) effort to index my Afghan narrative recordings from 1975 to the early 2000’s. The particular story discussed in the following, retranscribed with help from Faridon Sorush, a native of Herat City now living in Seattle, was one I recorded in the first week of my research in Herat, in western Afghanistan. The storyteller was introduced by a local school master and by his employer, with whom he lived as a poor, by then 92-year-old mason and sometimes comedian/storyteller. He had good teeth (important for my Herat dialect speech comprehension), a quick, indecorous wit, and a proclivity for animal and human imitations with gestures and sound effects, which he trotted out as much as possible in his highly mimetic storytelling. His audience members the evening when we met at one point reminded him that I was only recording audio, so the gestures and facial expressions he used so abundantly would not be recorded. His sounds and gestures supported a well-developed taste for transgression and mocking, as I saw more clearly when I reread the stories I recorded with him and compared them to others’ offerings.

Local humor was not central to my research agenda. I had proposed and been funded for a general survey of whatever were the active oral narrative traditions in the area. In this, the first week of my recording activities, I was still hoping to find what Albert Lord, my graduate supervisor, hoped I would find, some forms of extended verse narrative that would be relevant to then-current world Oral Theory

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discussion. Shah Mahmad's stories, in prose, played to the audience for their laugh lines, didn't help. Glumly, I registered this story in my very sparse field notes, "chain tale about misrule. " Here is the story, unfortunately divested in translation of gesture and vocal nuance. An account of my first reading and my rereading of it, 46 years later, follows the text.

The story was told by Shah Mahmad "Kukanak" ("Little Owl") at the house of village head Abdul Rahman in the village Qaimast, district Gozareh, Herat, Afghanistan, January 9, 1975, in the morning, outdoors.

> There was a man who filled a sack with his melons. Loading them on a donkey, he plodded off to find a city to sell them in and try to get some money for tea and sugar to take back home. In the city, each person who came picked up a melon and left, without giving him any money. When the melons were all gone and no one had paid him, he went to the king of the city to complain. The king said, "This is Melon City, it's all right that no one gave you any money."
>
> This guy was still standing there when a man came limping up to the king and said, "Sire, I have a plea." "What is your plea?" "I'm a thief. When I went to the house of Khan So-and-So to steal, when I pulled open the gate, the lintel beam was weak and it broke. The stones above it fell on my leg and I was injured." The king called his prime minister and his sergeant at arms, ordered them to bring the Khan and said, "Weren't you sorry for this poor thief, that you injured his leg?" The house owner said, "It wasn't my fault, it was the carpenter's fault." So they brought the carpenter, who said, "It's not my fault. While I was shaping the beam with my adze, a girl came out on her roof terrace—tight little breasts, velvet neck, rosebud lips, throat like a glass, slim waist, pearly teeth, eyes like stars, eyebrows like bows—I gazed up at her and my adze slipped and made the beam too thin." The king ordered the girl brought. She said, "It wasn't my fault, I heard a remarkable voice and I went up on the roof to look. It was someone selling drop spindles, calling out in a loud voice." They brought the spindle seller, who said, "It wasn't my fault. I was admiring the beautiful colors of my coat that the dyer colored so well, and without thinking I was calling out loudly." They brought the dyer and asked him why he had colored the coat so well. He said, "He had paid me well, so I dyed his coat well." The king said, "This dyer is the original culprit, take him and execute him!" As they dragged him toward the scaffold the dyer cried out, "Sire, I have a plea." "What plea?" "Please, I am ill-formed and ragged and worn looking, if you hang me, it won't look good. In the shop next to mine there's a young dyer, as handsome as any woman ever gave birth to, tall and fine-looking. Hang him instead so it will look nice." They brought the handsome dyer and hanged him.
>
> The melon seller watched all this and said, "What a government!!!" He went and sold his donkey and gear, went to the used clothing bazaar, bought himself some western-style trousers. He found an old broken chair and sat

> himself down at the city gate and called himself the government "collector of dead fees." He collected a fee for every dead person they carried out of the city to the graveyard, even the poor beggar from the mosque—he'd get his begging bowl. In one or two years, he collected 200,000 rupees, all from the dead.
>
> One day the king's daughter died and they brought her out for burial. He said, "Who is that?" "The king's daughter." "Go bring 3,000 rupees, then you can take her out." They went to the king and said, "The dead fee collection officer at the city gate says to deposit 3,000 rupees to go and bury your daughter." The king said, "Who is this officer? Who installed him there? Go, bring him here!" They went to bring him but he said, "Until you pay the 3,000 rupees I'm not going anywhere, I don't care about the king's orders." When the king heard, he said, "All right, give him the 3,000 rupees, bury the dead, then bring this guy here." They brought the melon seller and the king asked him, "Who ARE you?" He said, "I'm the collector of dead fees." "Who assigned you that duty and put you at the city gate?" "Here in Melon City, is there any need for a person to place someone at the city gate? You declared a thief to be a poor fellow and you hanged that dyer, and now you expect that someone is placing me at the city gate and giving me that job?" The king said, "Just take the money you've collected and get out of our city!"
>
> [*Shah Mahmad summed up the story*:] That was the story of Melon City, where a thief is called helpless and a dyer gets hanged. A guy collects "dead fees" at the city gate for five years and the government doesn't know it.
>
> [*Shah Mahmad answered our basic provenance questions*:] I learned this story many years ago from a guy from Turkestan. I was doing my military service. I could learn in four days what took 20 months of instructions the way the others learned things. Whatever they said would be written in my mind . . . I did my service in Zalmai Kot *[not far from Herat]*, maybe 33 years ago, in the year 1327. I was maybe 60 years old then! *[Audience, all adult males, laughs with him; he is 92 years old and locally famous for this bit of bureaucratic government absurdity among other things.]*

What follows here is, I suppose, a try at "ethnography of listening"—to oneself as a folklorist. Before my fieldwork I thought of chain tales as exercises in sequential silliness of the ilk of "Chicken Little," mainly told by and for children—which was true in my subsequent Afghan tale collecting experience—and that they mainly featured animals or childishly silly people ("noodle" tales). Apart from one initial replay during indexing activities a few weeks after the recording in 1975, I did not listen again to this recording or return to think about it, until 2019.

Again in 2019 I was (re)indexing, but by this time hearing Afghan tales in the context of some years of tale analysis (interpretation?) which came in my view to include some political contexts of performance (Mills 1991). In retrospect, I inferred 46 years later that there was more than free-floating silliness going on in this, his

last story performance for me. Shah Mahmad was performing for a group of adult males who knew and appreciated his style, with a foreign, unveiled female there with a big (very big) tape recorder for extra interest. They and others had gathered for his performance the night before in the house of a different village's headman. The next morning, a somewhat risqué decision had been made among my hosts to take me and my then government-assigned research assistant, Mokhtar Moslem, along with Shah Mahmad to another house to meet a female professional entertainer (a local "working girl" to be sure, unmarried, pregnant, accompanied by a male family member) who had a fine singing voice. Shah Mahmad joined her in recording some traditional romantic songs, playing a cooking oil tin in place of a frame drum. He also performed a song about the beauties of the camel, which parodied formulaic descriptions of beautiful women. Some of his audience members teased him about his never-married state and asked whether he would marry Tala, the singer/dancer.

From there, members of the company including Shah Mahmad took this traveling show: foreign woman, large tape recorder and other baggage, frequently giggling research assistant, riding on some very docile horses to a nearby village, where a second invited storyteller was a no-show but Shah Mahmad obliged with four more stories. This particular tale, the only chain tale and the last tale he told us, was framed by his summing up its theme as being about government misrule, and then by his and his audience's brief laughing allusion to a local memorate of Afghan government misrule, how he himself was drafted as a 60-year-old man to fulfill a year of military service. Also telling to me was that he remembered the tale as being told to him during that military service by someone, perhaps another conscript, "from Turkestan." Military conscription in what was then peacetime, virtually unpaid and intentionally separating young men from their home place, was unwanted contact with government, a nuisance, even a hardship on poor men, hardly to be avoided without connections and bribery. Anti-government humor was not hard to find.

So in 2019, deep in the age of Trump, this chain tale of Melon City struck me not as silliness but as trenchant allegory. With misrule daily on my mind, government actions in the news replete with inversions of logic, values and policy sacred to my aging leftish populist (read "radical leftist") state of mind, and no end in sight, the tale was also escapist: The simple but intelligent man who ran afoul of an unjust system himself triumphed by exploiting it, simply by putting on secondhand western trousers that looked to the population like a government uniform. Another aspect of injustice seemed to fit: Did all those people who ridiculously blamed the next person down the line for the "harm" (to a *thief*) actually *believe* the blame lay elsewhere, or did they (like some of our members of congress) simply see and use the present illogic of misrule to protect themselves? Was it only the poor, stupid dyer who did not figure out how to blame someone else, yet he in turn found an even less rational way in the moment to land the harm on someone else?

Having concocted an interpretive niche for this tale for myself on re-hearing it in 2019 motivated me to look closely at what data I had, scanty field notes, dubious headnotes and the recordings, to see if I could plausibly root my newly experienced transgressive enjoyment of this tale in Shah Mahmad's artistry or whether I was merely projecting. His two-sentence summary allowed me to make that connection.

But because I only heard this story once in Afghanistan, I also wondered if it had been out there in some forms in wider international circulation. As a matter of fact, Thompson's *Motif Index*, motif J2233: *Logically Absurd Defences*, is a close fit for the core chain of absurd self-exculpations culminating in the execution of an innocent bystander. There is also tale type AT 2031A*: *Wall in Construction Collapses*, but there the chain of blame lands on the sea (source of a pearl necklace), which remains unpunished.

Of further interest is the framing "move" of the melon seller's actions, which is not linked to the chain of exculpations in any tale type I could find. Its inclusion enabled Shah Mahmad (and me) to consider this tale to be about government malfeasance in general, because an innocent everyman is treated unjustly then uses the flawed-system logic of his exploiters (all the city's folk who took his melons without paying, plus the king himself who justified it so flimsily) to recover what he has lost and more. Other (often young) folktale heroes punish individuals by whom they are tricked, exploited, falsely accused etc. (tale type AT 978: *The Youth in the Land of Cheaters* or more remotely AT1538: *Youth Cheated in Selling Oxen Avenges Himself*), but this poor melon farmer, no youth, takes revenge on the whole system. He perverts both capitalism and the authority structure in a new move possible within Melon City's culture, monetizing death in a way absurd to Afghan thinking, extracting payment as "dead fees" for government "permission" to remove the dead from the city for burial. When finally confronted, only when the injustice lands on the king's own family, he speaks truth to power, exculpates himself by berating the king in whose Melon City neither justice nor government oversight are to be found. He is ordered to leave with his spoils. I presume the reason for his rapid expulsion is that the system/the king can't afford to have him around. This was pure escapism for this listener, in the concatenating landscape of falsity and misrule I perceived the Trump presidency to be.

But underdogs are universal heroes, their allegorical positions available for flexible identification. As Joan Saverino pointed out on first hearing the story (personal communication, June 1, 2021), "little people" Trump loyalists are also convinced that government is (has been) haywire in its logic and its deeds, that they (with Trump) must "take it back" by force. The melon seller thus makes a plausible Trumpian everyman hero as well, perhaps more available to them than to those who only from 2016 found themselves living in Melon City.

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Máirtín Ó Cadhain, "The Road to Brightcity"

Mairéad Nic Craith

As an undergraduate, I had fallen head over heels in love with the short stories of the Irish-language writer Máirtín Ó Cadhain. When I first met my future husband Ullrich Kockel, I gifted him an English translation of these (Ó Cadhain 1981). I wanted to share my treasured reading with him. Ó Cadhain's volume has journeyed with me over many university positions and house moves. Since Ó Cadhain wrote in Irish (Gaelic), his was a closed readership (Nic Craith 2009) and he has not garnered the international reputation he deserves. In the past decade, some of his major works have been translated into English and German, but it is in his native language that his writing is best read.

Máirtín Ó Cadhain was born in 1906 and raised in the Connemara *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking area) in the West of Ireland. Having trained to become a primary school teacher, he returned to the *Gaeltacht* to teach. A radical republican, he became active in the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and actively fought for better social conditions for Irish-speaking areas. His political activities didn't endear him to the local Catholic parish priest, who sacked him. Ó Cadhain subsequently moved to Dublin where he was appointed Commanding Officer of the Dublin Brigade of the IRA and eventually elected to the Army Council in 1938. He was arrested in September 1939 and detained, without trial, until December that year, at Arbour Hill prison. He was re-arrested a year later at the funeral of a friend who had died on hunger strike in protest at the lack of political status for republican prisoners. For more than four years, Ó Cadhain was interned in the Curragh military prison. He acknowledges that this period of internment in *Sibéir na hÉireann* (Ireland's Siberia) deepened his understanding of the human condition. A controversial

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character and a strong critic of the newly-founded Irish state, Ó Cadhain was eventually employed by Trinity College in Dublin as Professor of Irish. He died in 1970.

The novel *Cré na Cille* (Graveyard Clay; 1949) is regarded as Ó Cadhain's masterpiece, but my favourite piece is a short story entitled "An Bóthar go dtí an Ghealchathair" (The Road to Brightcity). It was originally published in Irish in his 1948 collection *An Braon Broghach* (The Cloudy Drop). The story was written when the author was still in prison. Ó Cadhain says that he penned the story over a few days in a quiet corner of a mess-hut. It was the first story that absorbed his full attention as a writer.

The narrative is loosely based on his mother and on the lives of all other *Gaeltacht* women in the west of Ireland who regularly sold eggs and homemade butter to earn income to raise their families. In the short story we journey with Bríd, the mother of two living and two still-born children, on a nine-mile walk from the rural *Gaeltacht* into Galway city to sell her domestic produce. As we read the story, we become aware of Bríd's physical and emotional circumstances and of the hopelessness of her situation. The journey takes place in the early hours and the reader "walks" with Bríd through the night.

At the beginning of the journey, it is quite dark, but there are some bright moonlit places, and the light of the moon is reflected on the granite stone walls. Although Bríd cannot afford the fare for a lift, there is a spark of hope in her that some passerby will invite her onto a side cart—particularly towards the end of the journey when it would be unreasonable to expect a fare. As neighbor after neighbor passes her without as much as a salute on the road, we can empathize with the hopelessness of her situation and the indifference of neighbors to Bríd's circumstances. Bríd pretends to be unconcerned as each horse and cart passes. She doesn't want to give the impression that she is desperate. There is one particular moment when she looks back and sees a neighbor who has regularly visited her home. She is hopeful of a lift but instead he quickens the horse and passes her by without a salute. She regrets the fact that she looked back, thinking it a sign of weakness. She must appear strong.

While her husband and children are at home in bed, Bríd is doing what generations of Irish women have practiced—going to the market to sell eggs and butter. This is what is expected of her and she must conform to community norms. Bríd's individual story is a shared pattern of women's experience within the constraints of a larger structure. Throughout her life, Bríd's fate has been determined by the expectations of her family and the wider *Gaeltacht* community. Few would challenge these norms—apart from Ó Cadhain himself whose confrontations led to many years in prison. As a younger woman, Bríd had wanted to emigrate to America, but her parents had refused to let her go. If her father had allowed her marry Larry the Peak, "it would have shortened her road to Brightcity by about six miles." Or indeed, if she had married Páid Conannon, "she'd be within call of the city, with nothing to do but get up fairly early, milk the cows, sit up on

her ass-cart and take the milk into town" (Ó Cadhain 1981: 73). Instead, she has been given to a husband who forgets to set the clock, so that she is already late when her journey begins.

There was no contraception in 1930s Ireland and Bríd has already had four pregnancies and has buried two children. "That's what robbed her of her young girl's shape and left her with the lazy bones of middle age" (68). The ache in her belly means she is now expecting a fifth child and will likely have many more while she is fertile. Although married to a sympathetic husband, he doesn't understand why Bríd is not as strong as his mother. "His own mother, when she was a servant girl with Liam Cathail used to go twice a day to the city with a tankard of milk and no cart to bring her home" (56). His grandmother used to carry a hundredweight of meal on her back to the city and would still be home before milking time.

Bríd's husband is hopeless at minding their two existing children. And what will be her fate when the children grew up? Will they emigrate to the US and leave her or will her unborn son bring a new daughter-in-law into the house who will resent Bríd's presence? Or will her children have to share her miserable fate? "Then they too would have the week's contriving to face and the Saturday walk" (71). There is a strong sense of powerless in the narrative, but that weakness is never spoken aloud. It is important to consistently give an impression of strength and of conforming to community expectations.

The irony in all of this is that the story was written at a time when Ireland had broken the shackles of 800 years of British colonialization and had gained its independence ten years previously. While colonialism had pushed the indigenous Irish Gaelic language culture to the western peripheries of the country, the indifference of Irish politicians to miserable conditions in the *Gaeltacht* was more challenging. Instead of nurturing and revitalizing the Irish language, politicians had drawn boundaries around the *Gaeltacht* regions in the hope that they would serve as repositories for the indigenous "peasant" language and culture while the rest of the country would advance and progress in an increasingly Anglophone world (Nic Craith 1996). For that reason, Ó Cadhain was determined not just to write in Irish, but to enrich the language by drawing on older Irish expressions and words that had fallen into disuse. (In consequence, some people find his writings in the original Irish language challenging to read.)

One reason I love the story is its very "ordinary-ness." It captures regular, everyday lives in 1930s rural Ireland. It is possible that Maxim Gorky's writings influenced Ó Cadhain's focus on the miserable conditions of everyday lives. Ó Cadhain suggests that upon reading a short story of Gorky's, he sat up in the bed and developed a fierce appetite for portraying every aspect of life in Ireland. Interestingly, Tomás Ó Criomhthain (O'Crohan), the author of *The Islander*, reports a similar reaction (Nic Craith 2020). On the day he was interned, Ó Cadhain was carrying Gorky's story in his pocket.

Another reason I love the story is Ó Cadhain's empathy with female emotions. The fact that a male writer "gets inside the head" of a female is (for me)

exceptionally impressive. I am aware that such an argument suggests that men and women see and feel the world contrarily and that this can be represented differently. In a post-modern world, such an argument would be regarded as very dubious. At the same time, I cannot help but appreciate the way Máirtin seems to understand a female perspective in a world which (at that time) was utterly dominated by men. Ó Cadhain is unflinching in his vivid description of the miserable conditions in which Bríd finds herself. And his understanding of the female outlook was not confined to Brid's mind but also her embodied experience.

We experience Bríd's emotional and bodily sensations as she moves on her journey. "Her body was hot from hard walking. Her feet were getting in each other's way and refusing to go forward. Every time she stopped to rest, her perspiring body shivered in the cold" (Ó Cadhain 1981: 67). As she approaches her destination, Bríd looks back at the road behind her and realizes that she will have to do it repeatedly, until her jaws harden and her cheeks become leathery, "printed with crowfoot marks like the marks of a milestone" (70). Ó Cadhain writes with memorable details about the effect of ageing on Bríd's body. The heavy physical labor will shape her body. There will be no escape while her body ages and her back bends. She will become tough and rough like all *Gaeltacht* women. She will acquire the hump of older women from carrying the butter creel on her back. Her jawbone will become sharp and bleak like the beak of a currach boat. "Such were the middle aged women she knew, their girls' features beaten ironhard by the weekly managing, the slaughtering Saturday walk" (70).

Of special note is the manner, in which Ó Cadhain gives voice to the unspoken thoughts and feelings of a married woman, who is in a psychological rather than a physical prison. She has never had the freedom to make her own choices and determine her lifepath. From the cradle to the grave, male family relatives control her life. Ó Cadhain's prison experience was undoubtedly a source of anthropological understanding and he was able to connect this to the psychological prison suffered by Irish-speaking women at the time.

It is as if the author is giving voice to the inner biography of a typical *Gaeltacht* woman. We have absolutely no idea what Bríd's voice sounds like. We have no concept of her vocal inflections, or timbre, but we are intensely aware of what is unspoken. Bríd's voice is silenced but not crushed and through the unspoken dialogues we hear her "voice" directly. Her words are restrained; her thoughts and emotions are unspeakable. We understand the pain communicated in her unspoken dialogues and these convey key insights that are central to the *Gaeltacht* experience. Ó Cadhain creatively imagines the disjuncture between what Bríd says and what she does. This is a freedom given to creative writers rather than anthropologists!

But Bríd is not entirely without optimism … There is one moment of triumph as she nears the end of her journey and uncovers the basket. The butter looks fresh and her waterdrop is clearly visible. She counts her three dozen eggs. "In no particular order, yet she knew the egg of each and every hen—the little grey pullet's, the speckled hen's one white with hardly the breath of a shell, and those of the

crested hen brown and big as duck-eggs" (78). Ironically, she would love one of those eggs for herself but it would have to be boiled in private out of sight from her husband and children and she is not one for secrets. She is proud of her produce and that she has managed the early morning walk. "Her pulse throbbed and her heart sang. She was gamesome and happy, knowing the pure high spirits of a young, wild creature, and her body was a scythe with a new edge to it eager for the swathe. She was ready again to take up her share of the burden of life. She gripped the strap of the buttercreel …" (78).

Ó Cadhain was not a professional anthropologist, but—to paraphrase Kirin Narayan (2012) —he has written a story that might not be labelled ethnography but is clearly ethnographically informed. Just as Chekov was richly ethnographic for Narayan, and E.M. Foster for Nigel Rapport (Rapport 1994), Ó Cadhain has captured the lives of rural women in an Irish-speaking Ireland as well as any ethnographer. The fact that he has presented it as "fiction" does not make it inherently less valuable than "objective" accounts that were written on 1930s Ireland by anthropologists such as Conrad M. Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball (Nic Craith and Kockel 2016). The story does not constitute formal ethnography, but it is "saturated with ethnographic insight" (Narayan 2012: 3) about rural Irish-speaking twentieth-century Ireland. It is full of personal details and carries personal and cultural meaning. Ó Cadhain matters to me in the same way that Chekov matters to Narayan. As a participant in *Gaeltacht* life, he is also able to stand aside and articulate his observations in a manner that invites readers almost a hundred years later to understand how women's lives in rural Ireland were shaped by larger systems. Drawing on his years of informal participant observation of *Gaeltacht* life, Máirtín Ó Cadhain's "Road to Brightcity" is a masterpiece.

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Helen and Scott Nearing, *The Good Life*

Martha Norkunas

The cultural changes of the 1960s and 1970s promised new freedoms for women and people of color, a public commitment to the peace movement, and a new respect for the environment. I was too young to be a full participant in the social movements, but old enough to be deeply impacted by them. They offered me thrilling possibilities: to live life in more just ways, in community, creatively, and naturally. It was during this time that I discovered *Living on the Earth* by Alicia Bay Laurel. I read about natural dyes and used onion skins to make a rich yellow and beets for a deep red. I sewed a flowing muslin shirt. I imagined living with like-minded friends, building a yurt and making a garden. The simple drawings outlined ideas about living a life that with others that was simple, kinder, and did not require much money.

Years later I was caught in a job that was stifling, but my family depended on both my husband's and my income. Around this time I came across a brochure from what was then called "The Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College" that described a "climate of unexpectation for educated women in America." Mary Ingraham Bunting "founded the Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study as an experiment to help women scholars and artists achieve their full potential" offering its members "a place to grow, each according to her own design." It recognized the needs of women with family responsibilities, providing them with space away from home, childcare and research funds to engage in scholarly or creative work. Women had "a room of one's own" as well as "support for combining work and family life." The women described themselves as thriving in the enriching, inspiring and empowering environment they found at the Institute,

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in the exchange of ideas and the sense of community. While sharing creative space with writers like Alice Walker and internationally known scientists and artists seemed beyond my reach, the Bunting Institute's language validated my frustration with not being able to be my creative best in a job that I could not figure out how to leave.

Desperate for a solution, I phoned an old friend to ask for the name of the other book we had discussed as teenagers, about the socialists who moved back to the land. Almost thirty years after I found *Living on the Earth* I discovered *The Good Life* by Helen Nearing. Just as *Living on the Earth* gave the teenage me a new vision of how life could be, and the Bunting Institute promised time and space apart from ordinary life where women, in a community of equality, could flourish, *The Good Life* offered a reconceptualization of how to live a just life with time to read and write and without the deadening impacts of consumer capitalism. Inspired by the Nearing's example, I made major changes in my life, and by extension, in the lives of my family members. My husband supported the changes; our children viewed them warily but with interest.

The Good Life detailed Helen and Scott Nearing's commitment to living equitably, outside of the cash economy. Like *Living on the Earth*, they made many of the items they needed and worked not to make a profit, but to sustain themselves. Without the demands of consumerism and freed from the profit motive they elected to labor for only part of each day, and part of each year. In this way they could consciously live a life of ideas, playing music, reading, writing, lecturing, and engaging in conversation with the endless stream of visitors who made their way to their home in Vermont, and, when that area became crowded with ski tourists, to their blueberry farm in Maine.

They left the city, Helen wrote, with three objectives. The first was to make a living "as independent as possible of the commodity and labor markets." Their second goal was healthy living through contact with the earth and home-grown organic food. Their third objective "was social and ethical": to liberate themselves from exploitation, including the plunder of the planet, the slavery of humans and animals, the slaughter of people in war and animals for food (Nearing 1990: 5). They opposed the accumulation of profit and "unearned income by non-producers" (5–6) and sought a use economy through bread labor and a quiet pace with time for leisure and "efforts directed toward social improvement" (5–6, 15). They rejected the idea of leaving the US entirely because they felt a responsibility to assist in building resistance to "the plutocratic military oligarchy" and "to have a part in formulating the principles and practices of an alternative social system" (4).

The Good Life suggested that if humans ate vegetables and legumes directly, rather than feeding them to animals and eating the animals, it would increase the world's food supply. Impressed by their refusal to use animals as laborers and their argument about increasing access to food for the hungry, I became a vegetarian. This meant that my husband and three children became practical vegetarians, because I no longer cooked meat. Our oldest daughter, then twelve, chose to

become vegetarian with me. I wanted to be more conscious about the enactment of my ideals without being rigid or judgmental so I did not try to convince my family or friends to change. This meant that when my husband cooked, he and our two younger children sometimes ate meat. As the years passed people often asked me if I missed meat. I truthfully told them that every day that I did not eat animals was a joy to me. It had unexpected practical benefits as well: low cholesterol and a lower grocery bill. Most importantly, I came to see animals as sentient nonhuman persons, with emotional lives, attachments to others, and different kinds of intelligence. I could not imagine eating them. As the dangers of the meat and poultry industry to the accelerating climate crisis became clearer, I was yet again glad of my decision.

The Nearings built their own stone house in Vermont, organizing the rocks they found in the area by size and shape. For months my husband and I went to construction sites every Sunday morning and filled our van with discarded rocks. When we returned home, I too organized them by size and shape, hoping to build a stone wall, and possibly, a stone structure. We did eventually build the wall, or rather he built it, and it stands today, a reminder of the humor with which we approached some of the ideas I encountered in the book (each Sunday he would awaken and say, "Rocks, rocks" as we headed out for the whatever construction site I had found that week).

Living outside the cash economy was a stunning idea to me. If I could reduce our cash needs, I could quit my job and instead develop meaningful projects that might generate less income but would be more fulfilling. The Nearings referred to insurance companies as a form of legal exploitation. When they received the estimate of the annual cost of insuring the outbuildings where they boiled the maple sugar into syrup they realized they could build a second set of buildings for the same amount. The second buildings could be used as backup if they were busy. They discouraged consumerism as a product of capitalism. They avoided interest payments. They did not participate in the stock market. I examined our bills, and with diligent research and bargaining, I discovered I could lower our household costs significantly. Emboldened by my success, I investigated other ways to spend less. I found I could bargain in the most unlikely of places including chain stores, and often received large discounts. In the days before everything went online, I went to the library and read *The Spendthrift Gazette* and learned about other ideas to lower living costs. Using less, and buying recycled items was also good for the environment.

I failed miserably on gardening, although I did start a compost pile. Wildly allergic to various plants, I chose not to spend hours in the sun completely covered in protective clothing. I regretted this, as gardening was central to the Nearings' self-sufficiency, and much of the book is devoted to descriptions of how to create effective compost piles and grow seasonal fruits and vegetables. My children questioned the efficacy of purchasing everything used, when, on a camping trip, the door zippers to their tents stopped functioning and they entered and exited through

the small rear windows. Still the humor of it provided them with the opportunity to make a film about the experience, with, of course, a used camera.

Reading about the Nearings reminded me of how I had felt many years before when I imagined that people could live different and better lives on the earth. With the various changes I had initiated, our lowered household costs, and careful planning, I left my job exactly one year later. With the help of many smart and generous colleagues who were committed to assisting with the projects I was designing, I was able to raise substantial funds for my salary and for scholarships to bring talented graduate students all over the state to help museums and historic sites create more diverse, and inclusive interpretations of the past. Individuals in the institution respected the work and the quality of the projects we produced; the institution itself struggled constantly to accommodate an unusual system that did not fit into any of its standard patterns.

I found I could not live outside the stock market as all employers obligated me to participate in investing in retirement accounts. I tried to identify socially responsible funds and companies that treated their workers humanely, were environmentally conscious, and were not implicated in producing any form of weaponry. I naively tried to invest in companies that made products that seemed to benefit society, such as healthcare, only to discover that many pharmaceutical companies charged exorbitant prices for much needed medicines in order to make large profits. It was an ethical minefield. In the end, despite its often huge financial gains, I tried to have as little money as possible in the stock market. When I was on the board of a national organization, I suggested moving the endowment to socially responsible funds. Two colleagues joined me in that effort and after three years of work, the board voted to transfer twenty-five percent of the organization's endowment to socially responsible investing. I was glad of the board's decision but surprised that the transfer was so modest.

At various times since reading *The Good Life* I have been more and less successful in removing myself from participating in the most blatant aspects of capitalism. I buy more than I need, for pleasure, although when I purchase a shirt or pants, I think about the women in garment factories all over the world who labored for many hours to mass produce clothes at inexpensive prices. This usually means, overwhelmed by the images of all the women toiling, I cannot stay in any clothing store for more than fifteen minutes. Sometimes I think about the biography of the items I buy: Where was it made? Under what conditions? What materials were used to make it? What will happen to it after I am done with it? How long will it take to biodegrade and when it breaks down, what impact will it have on ground water and on the earth that tries to absorb it? As the climate crisis accelerates, embodying aspects of the lifestyle described by the Nearings will be increasingly important. Living with less, growing organic foods, building with local materials, composting, being a vegetarian, and treating animals and land with respect will all be critical to protect the natural world.

In the leisure time they had apart from bread labor, the Nearings involved themselves in the arts, and in activism. Scott Nearing wrote and lectured around the country until he was well into his nineties. The couple welcomed hundreds of people to their homestead, sharing their ideas about living an alternative, ethical life. I dream of building an environmental house that is nontoxic, reuses water multiple times, and heats and cools with solar and wind energy. I hope to build it at an affordable price, documenting the process and putting the plans online, so that others can build affordable environmental houses too. I imagine creating a compound with artists and students, with each contributing to the whole, but no one making profits from the labor of the other.

The Nearings posed questions that were important to me all those years ago and that remain with me today: How can I live an ethical life in an environment of extreme capitalism? Does the evidence of my actions reflect my values? What does it mean to lead a good life? I use the question, "Am I acting with integrity?" to guide me on a daily basis; in a larger sense I see that I have fallen short of a life removed from the profit motive, though I have tried not to allow profit to be a driving force in my life. I wonder how the Nearings would have navigated the digital world and if and how they would have used social media.

By creating an alternative lifestyle on the margins of, but not completely outside an economic and political system that they considered unjust they used the evidence of their lives as a form of social protest and reinforced that message through writing and lecturing and hosting hundreds of visitors. Theirs was a systemic approach to change or at least modify the foundations of exploitation upon which the profits of others were built. They began their social experiment when Scott was in his fifties. Maybe a recommitment to the Nearings way of life and an effort to broaden my approach to be more systemic can be the next chapter in my life.

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Anthony Trollope, *The Palliser Novels*

Dorothy Noyes

Before there was television, there was the Victorian novel. For some of us there still is. I require a nightly escape to someone else's problems, distant enough to serve that purpose but in an idiom familiar enough to reassure me that my own sun will rise tomorrow. In uneasy times this means rereading. Among my most tattered volumes are Anthony Trollope's Palliser novels.

The son of novelist and journalist Frances Trollope, Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) became an influential civil servant in the British Post Office while producing almost fifty novels between 1847 and 1882. He also wrote journalism, edited magazines, and, after two failed attempts, became in 1868 a Liberal candidate for Parliament, though party machinations and electoral corruption ended this long-cherished hope. His novels were praised for capturing the texture of everyday life and creating characters as knowable as the reader's own neighbors, but after the 1860s his popularity waned, and critics averred that books so close to real life's trivialities and repetitions were hardly worth reading as fiction. His recycling of plots and characters was also attacked: the *Saturday Review* accused him of producing "Manchester goods," a kind of industrial fiction.

The novels evoke major Victorian debates, and Trollope counted himself a reformer, if not in the familiar key of melodrama. He declared that the "charming puppets" of Dickens were less interesting than the careers of morally "mixed" characters as they interact with circumstances and events. His purpose was neither to identify social abuses nor to mobilize reformist response: Trollope took reform itself as his subject. Taking aim at his fellow novelist and political *bête noire*, Conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, he addressed reform not as the

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transformative act of a charismatic leader, but as a mundane, iterative, cumulative process of social shift. In so doing, he mobilized different affordances of serial fiction from the most popular novelists of his time. His episodes do not pile up sensational and pathetic events to refresh reader interest on the way to a cliffhanger. Instead, narrative suspense lies in the recurrent confrontations of individuals with social pressures and their own divided feelings as they seek to make critical decisions.

Trollope's *Autobiography* describes the need for a novelist to live intimately with his characters:

> And as, here in our outer world, we know that men and women change, ...so should these creations of his change, and every change should be noted by him. On the last day of each month recorded, every person in his novel should be a month older than on the first. (1980 [1883): 233).

Time in Trollope's taleworld is consecutive, plodding along with events. There is no looking forward to the afterlife of the characters, who simply reappear in later novels. His two great series, the *Barsetshire Chronicles*, depicting the country clergy and gentry, and the Palliser novels, centered on London political life, each unfold in six long novels over thirteen years of production (1855–1867 and 1864–1879 respectively). The effect of reading the latest episode of a Trollope novel was of checking back in on characters who aged along with the reader in a world evolving contemporaneously with the reader's own. The taleworld spirals outward, with no radical break in setting, incident, or dramatis personae. From novel to novel, the landed gentry's milieu opens up to parvenus and foreigners, London journalists, Jewish moneylenders, working-class radicals, and more. At the same time the marriage plot, while never disappearing, cedes prominence to a wider range of confrontations over how society will reproduce itself.

Distinctiveness at the level of story is reinforced at the level of discourse. Serial production becomes an icon of incremental reform. Cyclical in format and recognizable in incident, the novels offer a continuous forward arc of narrative embedded in the unfolding of British public life. The mature novels appeared in usually monthly numbers in periodicals devoted to a mix of literary, political, and cultural coverage: they were not consumed in isolation from the world. While each novel was serialized, the most celebrated novels fell also into the two long series, within which characters would move in and out of the foreground, and a subplot left in abeyance might be taken up two novels later. The taleworld has the continuity and density of social life; like reality, it is unfinished. No plotline, not even a marriage, ever achieves more than provisional closure.

Trollope's great novels rewrite one another. Whether a poor woman in love with a rich man, a clergyman offered a sinecure, or a Member of Parliament invited into the government, his favorite protagonists are obstinate individuals struggling against an inherited plot. In the process, they resist their own happy ending. Trollope's extremists often sacrifice their own well-being, but their rejection of a stereotyped

pattern benefits others around them, modelling and legitimating alternatives. The end of the story is often what it would have been anyway, but with more self-awareness among the characters who have achieved it. The next time the plot is played out, it will admit a wider range of variation.

The Palliser novels interweave the interpersonal cycle of invitations and marriages with the political cycle of campaigning and legislation. The second novel, *Phineas Finn*, was the attraction launching Trollope's new magazine *Saint Paul's* in 1867, just after the passage of the Second Reform Act and just before Trollope's own run for Parliament. Published at the height of his fame, it commanded the highest advance yet paid for a serial novel. The story deals with the political aspirations of a good-looking, well-spoken barrister who is also Irish, Catholic, conscientious, and by parliamentary standards poor. Another plotline addresses the social ambitions of a second talented foreigner: Marie Max Goesler, a banker's widow, with a fortune from property in Vienna.

The two outsiders work their way into London society with the assistance of claustrophobic insiders. Phineas is mentored by the daughter of a Liberal earl, who loves him but marries a rich MP in the hope of attaining political influence as a hostess. She and others pester their menfolk into providing him with access to Parliament and office; once there, his own talent and labor advance him. Adaptable and unaggressive, he is immediately popular. "Madame Max," female and Jewish, has to be more careful: we watch her cautious advance as she selects dinner guests, fends off fortune-hunters, and pursues more confidential relationships. She charms the Duke of Omnium, an aged rake with the highest title in Britain, and brings him to the point of proposing marriage.

As assimilated immigrants to the world of dinners and country houses, Phineas and Marie wake up values that have gone dormant from the inheritors' neglect. Marie refuses the Duke, partly from dawning love for Phineas, partly preferring the respect and independence she has earned to the formal position she would gain as Duchess, and partly from an internalized sense of appropriateness. Rejecting interference from the Duke's daughter-in-law, Lady Glencora Palliser, she concludes on her own that the marriage would degrade both parties. This gesture of renunciation affirms both her integration and her independence. In the course of the succeeding novels Marie becomes Glencora's most intimate friend, sharing in her political intrigues, helping to look after the dying Duke, marrying a now-widowed Phineas, and at last becoming a surrogate mother to the dead Glencora's daughter. Repeatedly she demonstrates loyalty to her adopted class in the teeth of their own prejudices.

In a complementary political key, Phineas Finn also struggles to achieve his integrity. The First Reform Act of 1832 transformed the norms more than the forms of corruption in British elections, and Trollope shows this to be a serial process. Phineas gets through the door in the old way, but eventually wins a seat through his own eloquence. He has more trouble with the expectation of party loyalty, seeking independent mentors amid radical demagogues and inattentive

establishment Liberals. Early in his career, he resigns his hard-won office and, as he thinks, his political future, to support a losing bill in favor of Irish tenant right. In a later novel, urged to make church disestablishment a campaign issue, he continues to support it after his party has backed down. Social suspicions, exacerbated by party rivalries and a persecuting journalist, land him on trial for the murder of a fellow MP. In proving his innocence, he concludes that honesty in public life is impossible, but is eventually brought back to Parliament by the arguments, love, and money of Marie and her friend Lady Glencora.

Restlessness within the elite produces a complementary push towards reform. The husband and wife who anchor the novels offer contrasting approaches. Plantagenet Palliser, heir of the Duke of Omnium, is a colorless Liberal whose whole life is government. In novel after novel, he retreats from the drawing room to read blue books and plan the decimalization of the British currency: this, of course, never comes to pass in the novels and in British reality took another hundred years to achieve. His true political influence comes rather from his strong conscience: in recurrent conflicts he overcomes his inherited prejudices to admit his public principles into his private life. Often this is at the urging of his wife. Married off young to protect her fortune, Glencora is uneasy and sometimes destructive in her position. The rebellious insider to Marie Goesler's disciplined outsider, she patronizes upstarts who take her fancy, distributes concentrated family wealth to poor relations, agitates in her drawing room for causes that excite her enthusiasm. Even after death, her influence ensures that her children will be allowed to marry for love outside their rank. Because her position as future Duchess of Omnium is so central to the societal network, she can force others to follow her lead. Unlike her husband, she does not scruple to exercise this power. "We must follow our nature, Plantagenet," she tells him. "Your nature is decimals. I run after units" (Trollope 2011 [1873]: 416).

Their uncomfortable but increasingly solidary marriage encapsulates Trollope's account of progress. From novel to novel he repeats a metaphor of politics as a carriage pulled forward by runaway horses but held back from disaster by the "drag on the wheels" that slows it down to a safe pace. Phineas pays a personal price for supporting, too early, measures that are passed by a later legislature when broader consensus has been created for them. Trollope draws more than once on the real incident in which Disraeli took up the defeated Reform Bill of the Liberal party, rewriting it to expand the electorate at a moment when he felt it would be to the Tories' advantage. Though supporting the outcome, Trollope was appalled by the opportunism of the process. The statesmen of his time appear, lightly disguised, in the novels, and their tactics are not attractive. But the outcomes leave things better than they were. Unlike the idealistic vision of politics in Disraeli's fiction, Trollope depicts the slow sausage-making of real legislation as it interacts with the sensationalism of newspaper reporting and the incremental repetition of gossip. Policy-making in isolation from this larger conversation—Palliser's beloved decimal coinage—may be rational and serviceable in its goals but in practice it gets nowhere.

The most famous opening line in nineteenth-century European fiction comes from Tolstoy: "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" (1965 [1878]: 3). When we later see Anna Karenina reading on the train, it is an English novel about foxhunting, Parliament, and the specter of adultery: in fact, the first of the Palliser novels. In his opening line, therefore, Tolstoy declares that *Anna Karenina* will be a different kind of novel. What might this mean? It suggests a dismissal of seriality. Tolstoy's masterpieces are fewer and more singular than the Englishman's. Tolstoy admired Trollope, however, and shared his interest in contrarian characters uncomfortable in society. Both draw a correlation between individuality and unhappiness.

The difference is that, for Tolstoy, society offers no drag to rein back extreme impulses, only dead convention. To live well, his protagonists must withdraw. Anna abandons society not by committing adultery but by falling in love and refusing disguise; lacking the recourse to religion and rural life that saves other Tolstoy characters, she is destroyed. Trollope's young Glencora, from a mix of fear and honor, refuses to run away with her lover and regrets it for the rest of her life. But by remaining in society she is preserved to influence it. Jews and Irish, love and Liberalism, and also new money, speculation, and vulgarity have a larger place in the elite she leaves behind her. The marriage plot has spiralled into more heterogeneous alliance formations and negotiations of interest. Not through charismatic transformation but in serial iteration, with what Bakhtin called the "prosaic intelligence" of the novel (1981: 404), Trollope re-forms the world to await another episode.

In a research project on popular serialities, the students of Regina Bendix explored the "quotidian integration" of serial fictions into audience lives (Hämmerling and Nast 2012). I have just offered the selective reading that allows me to read Trollope before bedtime. During the day, I acknowledge a counterpoint in his work: social competition, prejudice, financial speculation, and media spectacle that gradually shift the balance of his serial iterations from opening towards unraveling. Even as he sought to solidify the liberal order in Britain, Trollope worked out a scenario for its self-destruction.

Does this prophetic pessimism discredit my nighttime comfort reading? Critics are starting to celebrate Trollope as a precursor of today's "prestige TV"—grim fictions that might murder sleep altogether if not for the psychological security of serial form. That reading is also incomplete. Trollope manipulates serial fiction's tension between familiarity and variety to lead me down a road that I might not have chosen. But he gives me tools for going forward. As the mostly harmonious outcomes of the *Barsetshire Chronicles* give way to the naked self-interest of *The Way We Live Now* (1875), the Palliser novels provide an emotionally bearable midpoint, in which setbacks are balanced with progress and one can see how small victories are achieved. They are, in all the ways that count, enabling fictions.

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Lamberto Loria, “L’etnografia strumento di politica interna e coloniale”

Diarmuid Ó Giolláin

Lamberto Loria (1855–1913) was an explorer who contributed to Italian museum collections in botany, zoology, physical anthropology and ethnography, especially from Turkestan, Papua, and Eritrea. A founding member of the Italian Colonial Institute (1906), in his later years he devoted himself to Italian folk culture. He founded the Museo Nazionale di Etnografia Italiana (1906) and the Società di Etnografia Italiana (1910), which organized under his presidency the first congress of Italian ethnography in 1911, during which he defended the use of the term *folklore* in Italian. He also curated the huge Italian folklife exhibition at the 1911 International Exposition in Rome (Puccini 2005; De Simonis and Dimpflmeier 2014; Giunta 2019), leading to the Museo delle Arti e Tradizioni Popolari “Lamberto Loria,” belatedly inaugurated in 1956.

In 1912 he founded the journal *Lares*. In “Ethnography as an Instrument of Domestic and Colonial Politics,” which appeared in the first number, Loria, citing a newspaper article praising Italian colonial troops, enthusiastically referred to the loyal Eritrean Askari. Muslims and Christians, despite their differences, happily served together in their ranks thanks to “the sagacity and authority of the Italian officer” who had formed a first-rate army “where value is placed on all the marvellous gifts of intelligence and all the defects of race and mentality are eliminated.” As an example of the superior Italian comprehension of native peoples, Loria recounted an episode from his time in Papua, when a local man asked him if it was true that the father of the government official in his presence had died,

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whereupon Loria assaulted the Papuan. Since it was forbidden to mistreat Papuans, Loria explained to the surprised official that the man's question, in terms of local custom, was so disrespectful that such an offense "can only be vindicated by the death of the offender," and he explained that if he had not been present, "what was a lack of respect would have been taken as a courtesy and the authority of the law would have greatly suffered."

The Italians did not know each other, Loria argued. Those from the north and center caricatured all those living south of Rome as corrupt Neapolitans. The government should send its best officials to the south instead of its worst, and its best qualified judges. If understanding the cultures of peoples "subject to a civilized nation" facilitated that nation's rule, it would benefit the Italian nation even more to understand its own people. Knowledge of the different customs of each province ought to lead to special laws attuned to those usages. Instead of "being harmful to the national spirit," this would be "the cement that will indissolubly unite the different Italian regions." This was the role of ethnography, and the Società di Etnografia italiana had both a scientific mission and a high national purpose.

The starkness of Loria's essay struck me forcefully when I first read it. It also sparked my curiosity about other scholars who carried out ethnography both in Europe and in the colonies: did they, like Loria, have an overarching perspective on ethnography? Richard Dorson's *The British Folklorists: A History* and *Peasant Customs and Savage Myths* (both 1968) discussed British folklorists in the colonies, but in a largely celebratory way and as an addendum to the principal imperial story, which was metropolitan. For Dorson, empire seemed to be a canvas rather than a system of power. Beginning in the 1950s with Michel Leiris, scholars probed the colonial foundations and applications of anthropology. Others from the 1960s, starting with Hermann Bausinger, investigated the relationship between folklore studies and cultural and political nationalism. More recently, Richard Bauman, Charles Briggs, Sadhana Naithani, Cristina Bacchilega and others have made more explicit connections between folkloristics and a global system of knowledge shaped by the expansion of the West. Loria in his own way envisaged a global ethnography, applicable as much to the south of Italy as to Eritrea or Papua, and he complained elsewhere that the type of ethnography devoted to "civilized peoples" prioritized oral literature and neglected material culture while the ethnographer's ignorance of the relevant languages meant that the opposite was the case with "savage peoples."

In an important recent work, Han Vermeulen (2015) has shown how ethnology and ethnography originated as a collaboration between enlightened Russian administrators and scientists and German-speaking historians and naturalists focusing on language, ethnicity, and history. The aim, carried out on numerous scientific missions, was to describe the peoples incorporated into the expanding Russian Empire. In 1740, on the second Kamchatka expedition, the historian Gerhard Friedrich Müller used the term *Völker-Beschreibung* in this context and his ideas were brought back, probably by his assistant August Ludwig Schlözer, an authority on the Finno-Ugric speaking peoples, to German-speaking central Europe where the

terms *ethnographia* (1767), *Völkerkunde*, *Ethnographie* (both 1771), *ethnologia* (1781–1783) and *Volkskunde* (1776) quickly appeared. The influence of Romanticism later lessened the comparative dimension of *Volkskunde* in favor of the investigation of national specificity and largely concealed the colonial origin of the intellectual matrix from which it emerged. Anthropology originated in philosophy and natural history and was for long beholden to craniology.

The late nineteenth-century notion of "colonial sciences" covered anthropology, medicine, law, and administration applied in the furtherance of colonial rule. The mid-twentieth century notion of applied or public folklore was, originally at least, largely American, but in a sense, folklore was always "applied," in the eighteenth century, as *Volkskunde*, a part of enlightened *Statistik* concerned with the collection, classification, and analysis of data bearing on the inhabitants of a polity. From the nineteenth century onwards, folklore was "applied" under the influence of Romanticism, by nation-building elements of civil society implicitly in opposition to existing political structures or by nation-states themselves as one of the "national sciences" (history, philology, folklore) devoted to the advancement of national culture and identity.

Loria's reference to Italian customs is in the context of the country's "southern question." While a unitary Kingdom of Italy was declared in 1861, a year later an insurgency in the south was tying down two fifths of the army. The desire to consolidate the Italian nation with its striking fracture between north and south influenced the work of criminal anthropologists such as Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909), who blamed southern "delinquency" on an African and oriental heritage, or Alfredo Niceforo (1876–1960), who portrayed the south, inhabited by "primitive" and "less evolved" peoples, as a colony to civilize. The folklorist and Sanskritist Angelo de Gubernatis (1840–1913) noted that the main reason why the law was often not observed was that it conflicted with local customs, and he called for the study of local conditions in order to adjust it accordingly. The great imbalance between the north and the south was to remain unresolved, to the extent that the response of the left when the government expressed interest in establishing colonies in Africa in the late nineteenth century was to retort that Italy had Africa at home. Juridical ethnology/folklore was pioneered by German scholars in both the European and colonial arena—Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Rechtsaltertümer* (1828) and Hermann Post's *Grundriss der ethnologischen Jurisprudenz* (1894–5)—and influenced Italian scholars. Raffaele Corso (1885–1965), for example, published a study of Italian juridical proverbs in 1907, seeing them as 'survivals' in the sense proposed by Tylor in *Primitive Culture* (1871), and on Abyssinian juridical proverbs in 1920, as part of what he called *folklore coloniale*.

Loria first visited Papua in 1898, around the same time as the celebrated expedition of the English anthropologist Alfred Cort Haddon (1855–1940) to the islands of the Torres Straits, a foundational moment for British anthropology. Haddon was to complain about Loria's rapacious collecting methods, including grave-robbing—although in his diary Haddon confessed to a similar offense, the

theft of skulls from a church in Ireland. He had taken up a chair of zoology in Dublin in 1881. In 1891–3, with the medical doctor Charles R. Browne as part of the work of the Anthropometric Laboratory that he had helped to set up, he published a survey of the Aran Islands that had sections on "anthropography," "sociology," "folk-lore" and "ethnology" and is probably best remembered today for its measurement of islanders' skulls. It was on leave from his Dublin post that Haddon first visited the Torres Straits in 1888, an experience that awoke his interest in the study of human societies, and he joined the Anthropological Institute and the Folk-Lore Society on his return. For a time, he was a member of the latter society's council, and he published on Irish folklore in its journal. His interest in folklore led him in 1892 to propose the amalgamation of the London Folk-Lore Society with the Royal Anthropological Institute. He taught physical anthropology at Cambridge University from 1894, while still holding his Dublin position, which he was able to resign following his appointment as lecturer in ethnology at Cambridge in 1900. His *History of Anthropology* (1910) divided the field into two overarching domains: physical and cultural anthropology. In a chapter devoted to sociology and religion in the section dedicated to the latter, he described the study of folklore, the "'lower mythology' of beliefs, customs, and superstitions," as a "valuable ally" of anthropology.

Similar complexities of disciplinary identification apply to Arnold Van Gennep (1873–1957), an independent scholar for most of his career. In France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, while French folklore studies had no institutional anchor, Durkheimian sociology considered cultural anthropology to be part of its remit but was not fieldwork-based and was hostile to the influence of physical anthropology, one of the reasons for the resurrection of the term "ethnology." Van Gennep's early publications, on non-western societies, were not based on fieldwork, such as *Tabou et totémisme à Madagascar* (1904), *Mythes et légendes d'Australie* (1906), and his classic, *Les rites de passage* (1909). He unsuccessfully tried to set up an ethnographic service for the colonies and, from 1908, he edited *Revue des Études Ethnographiques et Sociologiques*, founded by him and the colonial administrator and ethnographer Maurice Delafosse. The five months in 1911 and 1912 he spent doing fieldwork in Algeria led to a study on aspects of material culture, *Études d'ethnographie algérienne* (1911) and a curious ethnographic memoir, *En Algérie* (1914). His writings on French folklore appeared from 1910, stressing the value of fieldwork: most importantly *La formation des légendes* (1912) and the monumental *Manuel de folklore français contemporain* (1937–58). He argued that ethnography was the same whether carried out in France or in the colonies: the distinction made between ethnography and folklore, the former carried out in the colonies, the latter among whites, was basically racist in his estimation (Fabre and Laurière 2018).

From 1919, René Maunier (1887–1951) taught the sociology of Algeria in the law faculty of the University of Algiers and carried out fieldwork in Kabylia. In 1926 he was appointed to a chair of colonial legislation at the University of Paris's law

faculty where he established juridical ethnology as a new research field, setting up a workshop and a publication series. He sat on the committee of the Société du Folklore français, founded in Paris in 1929, and in 1932 was elected president of the renamed Société du Folklore français et du folklore colonial. His best-known work was the three-volume *Sociologie coloniale* (1932–42). *Loi française et coutume indigène en Algérie* (1932) and *Introduction au folklore juridique* (1938) gave two perspectives on customary law. While the latter with its insightful questionnaire remains an important text on French folklore, the former saw French law in Algeria as a set of strategies rather than of principles, and discussed the means of transforming native customs in order to facilitate colonization.

Loria was an independent scholar whose interests rather than training made him an ethnographer and a folklorist. His career, as with the other scholars mentioned, played out at a time when the social sciences had not yet taken the configuration that we recognize today, but when the remit of anthropology/ethnology, folklore studies, and sociology was beginning to be assigned in accordance with a division between western countries and the colonial world and between modern and traditional societies, and when physical anthropologists were still a power within the field of anthropology. To me, Loria's "Ethnography as an Instrument of Domestic and Colonial Politics" poses the question of applied research in a rather violent way but also suggests the inchoate research field of his time informed by contemporary scientific paradigms and nascent academic disciplines but framed ultimately by nationalism and colonialism. Folklore studies, it seems to me, could do with a deeper understanding of these processes.

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Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*

Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch

"Question your tea spoons!" It is a clear enough incitement, and a deceptively simple task—yet, I do not think I had ever come across it before reading *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* (Perec 1997). A friend lent me a copy to keep me entertained on a lengthy journey (from Dublin to Finland by train and ferry). The book struck a chord with me that has kept resonating ever since. Perhaps its profound effect on me was partly due to the context of travelling alone and having time to read slowly and repeatedly, interspersed with (discrete) observations of fellow passengers.

Georges Perec (1936–82), was a writer and an artist of words. Prolific in the extreme, he covered an impressive amount of genres and literary styles during his lifetime cut short by cancer. His natural skill for word games and mathematical problems made him a member par excellence of the French Oulipo group experimenting with form and seeking new literary structures (mostly through various constraint- and rule-based methods). To make a living, Perec worked for many years as an archivist-librarian in a science laboratory—a job one cannot help think he must have enjoyed on some level with his passion for taxonomy, categories, and list-making. Nevertheless, Perec's own works are notoriously difficult to label: sociological fiction, Oulipian exercises, oblique autobiography, hyperrealist descriptions and literary puzzles are some of the attempts at classification (see Andrews 1996: 775).

Species of Spaces and Other Pieces (1997, revised edition 1999) is a selection of Georges Perec's non-fictional works in English translation by John Sturrock. The volume contains some of Perec's most interesting writing from the point of view of ethnography, ethnology, and folkloristics, which is the aspect of Perec's rich and

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complex oeuvre I want to focus on here. The first and largest section of the book consists of the complete text of *Espèces d'espaces* (1974, "Species of Spaces"), where Perec with his characteristic mastery of literary forms contemplates the various spaces we inhabit in daily life. "To live is to pass from one space to another, while doing your very best not to bump yourself," Perec concludes his introduction to the work (1999: 6). Reflecting Perec's own world, *Espèces d'espaces* starts with an exploration of writing and the sheet of paper as a way of inhabiting space. This poetic opening flows into a consideration of how space comes alive through a multitude of everyday actions (14–5). In subsequent pages, the focus shifts from the confined space of the bed, gradually zooming out to increasingly larger spaces via subsections of the bedroom, the apartment, the apartment building, the street, the neighborhood, the town, the countryside, the country, Europe, and the world—arriving in an assemblage of seemingly eclectic reflections on space, spaces, and space-making. Along the way, many reoccurring key themes in Perec's writing are woven into the fabric of the text: Space (obviously), but also Time, Memory, and the Quotidian. The text is brimming with distinctive Perecquian traits, such as a typology of bedrooms where he has slept (23), the query "What does it mean, to live in a room?" (subsequently noting, quite rightly, that cats inhabit houses much better than people do, 24), as well as a radical questioning of taken-for-granted rhythms and habits (suggesting the layout of an apartment based on the senses, or have a division of rooms based on weekdays instead of circadian rhythms, 31–2).

For my own part, the passages displaying Perec's various ethnographic endeavors are among the most fascinating. Two sections devoted to the topics of "Moving out" and "Moving in", respectively, give a vivid depiction through a steady enumeration of the many actions it takes to complete the process of changing apartments: " … pinning together hanging up arranging sawing fixing pinning up marking noting working out climbing measuring …" (35–6). A more direct form of documentation is found in the subchapter "The Street", where Perec suggests a series of practical exercises: "Observe the street, from time to time, with some concern for a system perhaps. Apply yourself. Take your time". There is a relentlessness to the method prescribed: "Force yourself to write down what is of no interest, what is most obvious, most common, most colorless" (50). The instructions, here, are short, imperative and without much empirical data; in other projects Perec carried out more descriptive fieldwork. One year after *Espèces d'espaces*, the small book *Tentative d'épuisement d'un lieu parisien* was published (not part of the *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* collection, but published in English in 2010 under the title *An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris*). The book consists of notes from observing Place Saint-Sulpice during three consecutive days in October 1974. Perec was not interested in registering what had already been documented, but to "to describe the rest instead: that which is generally not taken note of, that which is not noticed, that which has no importance: what happens when nothing happens other than the weather, people, cars, and clouds" (Perec 2010: 3). While actually 'exhausting' a place in terms of observations is obviously an impossibility for a single

ethnographer (as Perec observes, while paying attention to one thing you inevitably miss something else), setting out *as if* it was possible exposes how we notice things and how our attention is directed. Perec's fieldwork notes, thus, give the texture of reality and reveal, as pointed out by Michael Sheringham, that "we are *immersed* in the *quotidien,* and that the endless stream of perception and utterance is the very stuff out of which the everyday (and ourselves as everyday subjects) is made" (2006: 268).

The drive to document the ordinary and the overlooked characterizes several other writings selected for *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces.* A taxonomic approach unites the texts taken from *Penser/Classer* (posthumously published in 1985). In "Notes Concerning the Objects that are on my Work-table" (144–147), Perec describes his own work desk in detail, together with matter-of-fact comments on specific objects that can, or cannot, be found on the table. What has the air of a rather trivial inventory, culminates with a revelation of a project aimed at comprehending personal experience, namely as "a way of marking out my space, a somewhat oblique approach to my daily practice, a way of talking about my work, about my history and my preoccupations, an attempt to grasp something pertaining to my experience, not at the level of remote reflection, but at the very point where it emerges" (147).

Although much of Perec's interest seems to be devoted to objects and cerebral processes (such as remembering and classifying), he also demonstrates a keen awareness of bodily practices and movement. A remark such as "the rearrangement of my territory rarely takes place at random" (144), reveals an insight about how tidying one's desk connects rhythm and space in marking the beginning and ending of projects, or constitutes a means of coping with indecisive days. Marcel Mauss's essay "Techniques of the Body" made an impression on Perec, and he refers to it on several occasions. In "Reading: A Socio-Physiological outline", Perec notes that the "descriptive ethnology" of Mauss relates "with far more acuity and presence than most of the institutions and ideologies off which sociologists habitually feed, to the histories of our bodies, to the culture that has shaped our gestures and our bodily postures, and to the education that has fashioned our motor functions at least as much as our mental acts" (174). What happens in the actual grasping of the message, is the question Perec poses when considering reading as an activity of the body (174–85).

Perec's investigation of the everyday is perhaps most clearly outlined in the texts taken from *L'Infra-ordinaire* (1989). The initial essay "Approaches to What?" stands as a statement of intent. Perec comments on how we notice the big events, pay attention to the extra-ordinary, the scandals and spectacles, while the questions he finds matter the most are not answered:

> What is really going on, what we're experiencing, the rest, all the rest, where is it? How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every

> day and recurs every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infraordinary, the background noise, the habitual? (209–10)

Here, what the eyes usually glide over is thrust into the spotlight. The infraordinary, the quotidian, was a field of focused interest within Perec's circles (not least through Lefebvre's work on the critique of everyday life). However, Perec's contribution was original and intimately connected to his fascination for spaces, places, personal as well as collective memory. Perec was not merely making a point, he had a practical method based in ethnographic fieldwork in mind: questioning, inventorying and describing (see Sheringham 2006: 250). A method he applied in numerous project and writings:

> What we need to question is bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners, our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms. To question that which seems to have ceased forever to astonish us. We live, true, we breathe, true; we walk, we open doors, we go down staircases, we sit at a table in order to eat, we lie on a bed in order to sleep. How? Where? When? Why?
> Describe your street. Describe another street. Compare.
> Make an inventory of your pockets, of your bag. Ask yourself about the provenance, the use, what will become of each of the objects you have taken out.
> Question your tea spoons. (210)

Is it trivial? Of no importance? Were the insistent directions above actually meant to be practiced? Perec does not give much guidance in terms of results and knowledge to be gained, there are no triumphant 'ahas,' smug conclusions or a final analytical bravado to tell us what it all means—just a persistent curiosity. Perec referred to his projects of registering everyday life as "sociological." Still, he is not tied to any specific discipline. Being more of a writer than a researcher, he placed lived experience above abstract theory. However, his method of writing demonstrates critical links between literature and the field of humanities and social sciences. What emerges is writing as a fieldwork practice in itself (cf. Phillips 2018: 185). Observation and description serve as a method of uncovering crucial aspects of reality and everyday existence.

Taxonomy can hide just as much as it reveals, but as a folklore archivist, I feel an instinctive affinity with Perec's incessant classifications and inventories as a form of exploration of the everyday. Taxonomic sense-making, then, can be employed to register techniques of the body, as when Perec observes genres of movement from his stationary vantage point at a café at Place Saint-Sulpice: "… degrees of determination or motivation: waiting, sauntering, dawdling, wandering, going, running toward, rushing (toward a free taxi, for instance), seeking, idling about, hesitating, walking with determination" (Perec 2010: 10). Inventorying and describing gives the ethnographer tools to deal with the inexhaustibility of everyday life.

Despite its playfulness and lightness, there is a melancholy and sense of loss permeating much of Perec's writing (cf. Wilken and Clemens 2017: 3), something brought home with acute poignancy in the closing sentences of *Species of Spaces*:

> My spaces are fragile: time is going to wear them away, to destroy them. Nothing will any longer resemble what was, my memories will betray me, oblivion will infiltrate my memory, …
> Space melts like sand running through one's fingers. Time bears it away and leaves me only shapeless shreds:
> To write: to try meticulously to retain something, to cause something to survive; to wrest a few precise scraps from the void as it grows, to leave somewhere a furrow, a trace, a mark or a few signs (91–2).

To some degree, the above can be said to stand for the arbitrariness of any documentary project. Still, a structured gaze applied in open-minded observation, an attention to detail in the taken-for-granted seems a marvelous platform for actively registering the ephemeral ordinary life. The reason I find myself returning to Perec time and again, is not for the theory, not for the method, but for the attitude and the attempt to retain a sliver of everyday existence.

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Agnieszka Holland, *Die Spur*

Arnika Peselmann

Der Film *Die Spur* (polnisches Original: *Pokot*, 2017) der polnischen Regisseurin und Filmemacherin Agnieszka Holland, von ihr selbst als „feministische[r] Ökothriller mit schwarzem Humor" bezeichnet (Wurm 2018), ist die Verfilmung des Romans *Der Gesang der Fledermäuse* (2011; polnisches Original 2009) der Nobelpreisträgerin Olga Tokarczuk. Beide zusammen haben das Drehbuch verfasst, für das sie von klerikal-konservativen Kreisen in Polen scharf kritisiert, von liberal-progressiven Teilen der Bevölkerung sowie auf internationaler Bühne jedoch gefeiert und prämiert wurden.

Zentrale Protagonistin des Films ist die pensionierte Brückenbauingenieurin und strikte Vegetarierin Janina Duszejko. Sie, die sich nur bei ihrem Nachnamen nennen lässt, lebt mit ihren beiden Hündinnen Lea und Bialka in einem Haus am Waldrand im tschechisch-polnischen Grenzgebiet. Ihre Tage verbringt sie mit astrologischen Studien und als unkonventionelle Aushilfslehrerin für Englisch in der nahegelegenen Kleinstadt. Als ihre Hündinnen von einem Freilauf nicht zurückkehren, beginnt sie eine erfolglose Suche, bei der sie kurzerhand auch ihre Schüler*innen einspannt. Auf die Unterstützung der Polizei kann sie dabei nicht setzen, zumal diese durch eine Serie von Todesfällen in der lokalen Jägerschaft in Beschlag genommen ist. Als erstes trifft es Duszejkos groben Nachbarn und Fallensteller ‚Riesenfuß', in dessen Kehle sich ein Tierknochen befindet. Als nächstes liegt der örtliche Polizeichef, der Duszejkos jahrelange Eingaben über Verstöße gegen das Jagdgesetz ignoriert hat, erschlagen im winterlichen Wald. Im Schnee sind allein die Klauenabdrücke von Rehen sichtbar, und Tierblut findet sich in seiner Kopfwunde. Dann trifft es Wnętrzak, den vermögenden Besitzer einer

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Fuchsfarm und eines inoffiziellen Bordells. Seine sadistischen Züge lässt er sowohl an den eingepferchten Farmtieren als auch an einer jungen Frau aus, die von Duszejko aufgrund ihres Geburtshoroskops als ‚Frohe Botschaft' bezeichnet wird. Deren schwierige familiäre und finanzielle Lage nutzt Wnętrzak skrupellos aus. Auch er wird im Wald ermordet aufgefunden, wobei die Spuren an seinem Leichnam von Wildschweinen herzurühren scheinen. Während Duszejko den lokalen Staatsanwalt davon zu überzeugen versucht, dass die Todesfälle die Rache der Tiere an den Menschen für die erlittenen Grausamkeiten seien – der kritische Punkt des Leidens ist erreicht, nun ist die Zeit der Vergeltung" (1:21:00) –, wird das vierte Opfer gefunden: Der Ortsvorsitzende, der seine Familie tyrannisiert und betrunken gesteht, Duszejkos Hündinnen bei einer Jagd erschossen zu haben, liegt bedeckt und angefressen von Scharlachkäfern tot im Wald. Als letztes kommt der Dorfpfarrer im Anschluss an eine makabre Feier zu Ehren des heiligen Hubertus als Schutzpatron der Jäger bei einem Kirchenbrand ums Leben. Dieser, so Duszejkos Deutung, sei vermutlich von Elstern verursacht worden, die brennende Zigaretten in den Dachstuhl der Kirche verbracht hätten. Nachdem zunächst ‚Frohe Botschaft' des Mordes an Wnętrzak beschuldigt wird und im Untersuchungsgefängnis einsitzen muss, gerät schließlich Duszejko selbst unter Verdacht, die Mordserie begangen zu haben. Daraufhin tritt ihre menschliche Wahlfamilie in Aktion, die sich im Laufe des Filmes nach und nach zusammenfindet: Dazu gehören ihr Nachbar Matoga und ‚Frohe Botschaft' ebenso wie der schüchterne IT-Spezialist und William Blake-Übersetzer Dyzio und der tschechische Insektenforscher Boros Schneider, mit dem Duszejko eine erotische Beziehung pflegt.

Der Film berührt diverse Themen, die mich in meiner kulturanthropologischen Arbeit beschäftigen, und hat vor allem in zweierlei Hinsicht bei mir einen besonderen Eindruck hinterlassen: Das betrifft zum einen die Darstellung der Mensch-Tier-Beziehungen, die sich zwischen Duszejkos Empathie für tierliches Leiden und dem Zusammenleben mit ihren Hündinnen als *companion species* (Haraway) einerseits und einem nahezu plakativen „ontologischen Anthropozentrismus" andererseits bewegt, der den „Menschen als Zielpunkt des Universums deutet" (Borgards 2015: 71) und das „seelenlose Tier" allein dem menschlichen Gebrauch überlässt. Zum anderen ist es die literarisch-filmische Auseinandersetzung mit den Grenzregionen, die als frühere Siedlungsgebiete der heute vertriebenen deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung sowohl von einem schwierigen Erbe zeugen als auch als Projektionsfläche für alternative Gesellschaftsentwürfe dienen.

Die Handlung des Films findet wie die des Buchs im Glatzer Tal statt. Diese niederschlesische Region an der polnisch-tschechischen Grenze gehörte bis 1945 zum Deutschen Reich und wurde nach Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs Teil der Volksrepublik Polen. Ähnlich wie in der Tschechoslowakei war auch hier die deutschsprachige Bevölkerung zur Migration gezwungen. Dabei spiegelt sich das vor allem durch die NS-Verbrechen belastete, deutsch-polnische Verhältnis auch in familiären Beziehungen wider. Im Film wird dies besonders an der

Familiengeschichte von Duszejkos Nachbar Matoga deutlich. Dessen polnischer Vater war als Bergbauingenieur nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg in die Region gekommen. Er, der während des Krieges in einem deutschen Lager interniert war, heiratete die Tochter eines deutschen Kollegen, dem aufgrund seiner bergbaulichen Kenntnisse die Ausreise aus der Volksrepublik Polen verwehrt worden war. „Man heiratet ja aus Liebe für gewöhnlich“, erzählt Matoga seiner Nachbarin Duszejko bei einem Joint am Lagerfeuer und mit der Musik der tschechischen Undergroundband The Plastic People of the Universe im Hintergrund, „er aber hat aus Hass geheiratet“ (1:12:20). Und so wählt der Vater aus Rache für das von Deutschen zugefügte Leid für seinen Sohn den schwer auszusprechenden polnischen Vornamen Świętopeł. Dieser macht es seiner deutschsprachigen Ehefrau nahezu unmöglich, ihr eigenes Kind beim Namen zu rufen. Die Mutter, die unter der Gefühlskälte in ihrer Ehe leidet, erhängt sich schließlich auf dem Dachboden. Matoga bleibt mit seinem Vater zurück, der jedoch unfähig ist, eine Beziehung zu seinem Sohn aufzubauen. Nach außen wird kommuniziert, die Mutter habe die Familie verlassen, um nach Deutschland zu fliehen.

Welche Auswirkungen die Vertreibung auf die zurückgebliebene Bevölkerung hat und hatte, ist in der Nachwendezeit zum Gegenstand literarischer, wissenschaftlicher und aktivistischer Aufarbeitung in Polen wie in Tschechien (Peselmann 2018) geworden. Die Grenzregionen, die kulturell und wirtschaftlich in besonderem Maß von den deutschen Bewohner*innen geprägt wurden, stehen dabei häufig im Fokus, wie beispielsweise bei der ins Altvatergebirge verlegten Handlung des Romans *Alois Nebel* (2006) von Jaroslav Rudiš und Jaromír Švejdík. Dienten diese ‚entleerten‘ und dann neu besiedelten Landschaften in der Literatur der 1940er und 1950er Jahre nicht selten als Projektionsfläche für gesellschaftliche Utopien, als Orte, in denen ein neues und besseres Zusammenleben nach sozialistischen Idealen Realität werden sollte, wie im ideologisch stark gefärbten Roman *Nástup* (1951) von Václav Řezáč, sind die Grenzregionen in der postsozialistischen Literatur häufig Orte, die von destruktiv-patriarchalen Strukturen, Rechtlosigkeit, nicht aufgearbeiteten Gräueltaten, Rache- und Schuldgefühlen sowie gestörten Verbindungen von Menschen und ihrer Umwelt geprägt sind. Und auch der Film *Die Spur* kontrastiert immer wieder die landschaftliche Schönheit des Grenzlands mit den Folgen vergangener und gegenwärtiger Grausamkeiten: sowohl zwischen Menschen als auch zwischen Menschen und anderen Lebewesen.

Duszejko, die schwer unter dem Verlust ihrer Hündinnen leidet – „sie waren meine Familie, meine einzigen Angehörigen, meine Töchter“ (17:35) – und den Dorfpfarrer um Hilfe bittet, findet für ihre Trauer kein Gehör: „Man darf Tiere nicht wie Menschen behandeln. Das ist Sünde. … Beten Sie lieber – und zwar für sich.“ (18:15) In der Vorstellung des Pfarrers ist Duszejkos Bedürfnis, ihre Hündinnen zu finden, um sie bestatten zu können, wider die Ordnung der Welt. „Das ist Hochmut solche Friedhöfe, nichts als Hochmut. Gott hat die Tiere den Menschen untergeordnet“ (ebd.) wettert er und bestätigt damit das, was unter anderem die Kunstwissenschaftlerin Jessica Ullrich (2020) als gesellschaftliche

Marginalisierung der Trauer um ein tierliches Lebewesen konstatiert und kritisiert. Mit Unverständnis und Abwertung begegnet auch Duszejkos Umfeld ihrem Schmerz um den Tod von Tieren; dieser schließt ihre Hündinnen ebenso ein wie die Farmtiere oder die gejagten Tiere des Waldes wie beispielsweise ein junges Wildschwein mit Lungendurchschuss, dem sie unter Tränen in seinem Todeskampf beisteht. „Ich habe mich schon immer gefragt, warum sich Frauen in Ihrem Alter so mit Tieren befassen. Gibt es keine Menschen, die Sie beschäftigen?“ (1:00:01) fragt sie der junge Dorfpolizist, als sie den unrechtmäßigen Abschuss des Wildschweins anzeigen will. Duszejko, der in ihrem Alltag beständig Sexismus und Ageismus widerfährt, wird von Holland im Film als komplexe Figur gezeichnet, die sich ihrer Wahrnehmung als ‚wunderliche alte Frau‘ bewusst ist, diese jedoch auch für sich nutzt und zugleich durch ihre Klugheit, ihre Sinnlichkeit, ihren Humor und ihre Selbstironie, aber auch ihre unbändige Wut immer wieder unterläuft.

Mit ihrer vehement vorgebrachten Behauptung, die Todesfälle an den Jägern seien die Rache der Tiere für ihr erlittenes Leid – wobei ihr weiterführender Verweis auf Massentierhaltung und den Ausbruch der Vogelgrippe gerade unter den Bedingungen der Sars-CoV-2-Pandemie mehr als aktuell erscheint – berührt der Film latente Ängste von der Umkehr der scheinbar natürlichen Ordnung und lässt verdrängte Schuldgefühle sich in Erzählungen Bahn brechen: So berichtet die Frau des Ortsvorsitzenden, die sich vor der Jagdbeute ihres Ehemanns graust und die zerteilten Tierkörper in ihrem Kühlschrank kaum ertragen kann, von der Legende des Nachtjägers. In ihrer Version, die „noch aus deutscher Zeit stammt“ (1:31:00), geht der Nachtjäger auf einem Storch reitend und in Begleitung von zwei Hunden nicht auf die Jagd nach Tieren, sondern nach „bösen Menschen“, die er jagdkundig zerteilt und zur Mahnung durch Schornsteine in Wohnhäuser herablässt. Wie der Jäger zum Gejagten wird, ist narrativ umfangreich bearbeitet worden. Die dabei gerade im Horror-Genre explizit gemachten Attacken von Bienen, Vögeln oder Bären unterbleiben im Film *Die Spur* jedoch völlig. Es sind vielmehr tierdokumentarische Aufnahmen, die die vorsichtig-interessierten Blicke von Rehen einfangen, das umsichtige Verhalten eines Fuchses, der sich in der schneebedeckten Landschaft bewegt, Igel, die sich über Fallobst hermachen, oder ein Wildschwein, das sich neugierig in Duszejkos Haus vorwagt; aber auch die grausam gehaltenen Farmtiere, die ohnmächtig im Kreis laufen und sich in die Gestänge ihrer winzigen Käfige verbeißen oder ein gehetztes Reh, das der Treibjagd zu entgehen versucht.

Der Film endet mit einem Szenario, in dem die geschlagenen Wunden verheilt sind und stattdessen das utopische Potential des Grenzlandes in den Vordergrund tritt: Während sie nach einem fröhlichen Mittagessen mit ihrer (menschlichen) Wahlfamilie mit ihren Hündinnen Lea und Bialka über die Waldwiesen vorbei an äsenden Rehen läuft, ist Duszejkos Stimme aus dem Off zu hören: „Ich bin in einer Zeit aufgewachsen, in der man dazu entschlossen war, die Welt durch revolutionäre Visionen zu verändern. Heutzutage nimmt man alles, wie es ist, und glaubt, dass es immer so bleibt. Aber es muss doch etwas Neues kommen, das war immer so. … es wird etwas geschehen, was wir nicht vorhersagen können, es beginnt ein neuer

Zyklus und eine neue Realität." (1:54:40) Auf die Abschlussszene angesprochen, erklärte Holland in einem Interview: „Wir wollten beim Zuschauer dieses Gefühl erzeugen, dass man sich sagt: Verdammt, alles könnte doch so einfach sein! Die Welt könnte so viel besser sein! Warum ist sie es nicht? … Klar: Utopien sind gefährlich und können bei der UdSSR enden. Aber eine Welt, die ihren Glauben an Gleichheit und soziale Gerechtigkeit verloren hat, ist eine unglaublich traurige Welt." (Wurm 2018) Das Ende, das in der Kritik von manchen als zu idyllisch, von anderen als zu wenig radikal ‚anders' bewertet wurde, verweist dennoch auf die Kraft der Erzählung als eine Form des Weltgestaltens und ist nicht zuletzt eine Einladung, neue Formen des Zusammenlebens von Menschen, aber auch von Menschen mit anderen Lebewesen zu imaginieren.

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Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Mensch und Raum*

Johanna Rolshoven

Wie oft sind die Bücher zugeflogen, die uns packen, voranbringen und weiter begleiten als uns bewusst sein mag. Es sind serendipische Zufallsfunde in Bibliotheken, Buchhandlungen, Antiquariaten oder wortwörtlich auf der Straße, in den Kisten der privaten Bouquinist*innen. Bücher gelangen natürlich auch auf den üblichen Werbewegen zu uns oder weitaus schöner: mit Empathie und Widmung versehen als Zuwendung, Empfehlung, Gabe von Freund*innen und Kolleg*innen. Manche davon sind wie zugeschnitten auf uns, wir begegnen ihnen oder verpassen sie auch. Das Verhältnis zwischen Menschen und Büchern ist eine faszinierende Geschichte, sofern gesellschaftlich ermöglicht und erwünscht.

Die Gegenwart markiert eine Wende in der Wissenschaftskultur, den Austausch über Bücher betreffend: ein zunächst schleichend, dann evident ökonomisierter Wissenschaftsbetrieb, der ähnlich den grauen Männern in Michael Endes *Momo* die Zeit abschafft, Kolleg*innen und Studierenden Bücher zu empfehlen, sich über Bücher, Sonderdrucke und Lektüren auszutauschen, sich Büchern intensiv zu widmen, oder sogar mit Autor*innen in Kontakt zu treten, wie Christine Burckhardt-Seebass dies mit ihren Studierenden tat, mit denen sie Postkarten verfasste an die Autor*innen von Schriften, die die Unterrichtsdiskussion in besonderer Weise angeregt hatten. Das Verweben des Denkens, das sich so vollzieht, ist eine Grundlage der (Geistes-)Wissenschaften, nachhaltig und tragfähig für „wissenschaftliche Qualitätssicherung", die heute über Reviews, Listen oder Preise Anerkennung eher individualisiert und hierarchisiert als den konzertierenden Charakter von Wissenschaft zu unterstreichen. Auch wenn dieses Wissenschaftsdispositiv Autor*innen, meist Männer, als heroische Figuren konstruieren mag, die „Ansätze"

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hervorbringen, sind sie doch eher Kollaborateur*innen und Medien in einem Feld aus Impulsen, Zeitverhältnissen und Referenzen.

Der ‚Rückblick' auf eine individuelle Buchrezeption mag diese kleine Vorrede illustrieren. Es handelt sich um Otto Friedrich Bollnows *Mensch und Raum*, das mein Denken in vieler Hinsicht beschäftigt hat. Hier ist es Anlass und auch epistemisches Ding, über die Verwobenheit der Wissenschaft mit den Zeitverhältnissen und dem eigenen Denkenlernen nachzudenken. Der 1963 bei Kohlhammer in Stuttgart erschienene und seither nach wie vor in hohen Auflagen verlegte Band hat mir mein wichtigster intellektueller Partner, mein Mann Justin Winkler, in der ersten Phase unseres Kennenlernens, in den 1990er Jahren, nahegelegt – in einer Zeit, in der sich unsere Fragen, Anliegen und Themen vermischt haben: die Auseinandersetzung mit den Bedingungen der Welt, in der wir leben: mit Räumen, Übergängen, mit Ressourcen wie Wasser, Luft und Klang, mit Anthropologie, Philosophie und Ästhetik, die Natur- und Geisteswissenschaften zu verknüpfen in der Lage sind.

Der Autor, Otto Friedrich Bollnow (1903–1991), Phänomenologe und Hermeneutiker, studierte zunächst Naturwissenschaften und war als Schullehrer tätig. Das Interesse an Reformpädagogik motivierte sein weiteres Studium der Pädagogik und Philosophie. Wie viele seiner Zeitgenossen hatte Martin Heideggers 1927 erschienenes Buch *Sein und Zeit* sein Denken und seine Berufslaufbahn nachhaltig beeinflusst. 1953 bis 1970 wirkte Bollnow als Universitätsprofessor für Pädagogik und Philosophie in Tübingen. Dort entstand das bis heute viel rezipierte Werk *Mensch und Raum*, mit dem er den auf den russisch-französischen Philosophen und Psychiater Eugène Minkowski zurückgehenden Begriff des gelebten und erlebten Raumes als Schlüsselbegriff einer anthropologischen Daseinsanalyse formuliert. Aus einer Unmittelbarkeit des Alltagserleben heraus beschreibt Bollnow das Verhältnis zwischen Mensch und Raum und attributiert dabei dem Handeln und dem Körper ein Gewicht, das für mich zum Zeitpunkt meiner ersten Lektüre in den 1990er Jahren sicher eine über das Studium einer „Wirklichkeitswissenschaft" (Clemens Albrecht) wie der „Volkskunde" disponierte Empfänglichkeit traf.

Über Bollnow (und Justin Winkler) habe ich die Phänomenologie entdeckt, die in Begriffe fasst, was die empirische Alltagskulturwissenschaft zu erheben vermag. Vor allem hatten mich die Passagen über die Gerichtetheit von Räumen angeregt, ihre Bewegungsdimension, der „hodologische Charakter" (Kurt Lewin) der von Menschen gedachten und erschlossenen Räume. Über das Sich-Bewegen im Wohnen, sich Behausen, Denken, Kommunizieren und Handeln werden Zeit und Raum im Alltagstun verknüpft. Aus dieser Erkenntnis haben sich mir in den folgenden Jahren Verständnisgrundlagen der (strukturellen, psychosozialen und historischen) Zusammenhänge zwischen Individuum und Gesellschaft eröffnet, die mich stets interessierten und auch jene politischen Dimensionen aufzeigen, die die gegebene Welt zu einer veränderbaren macht. Diese Grundlagen zur Konstituierung des sozialen Raumes haben in meinen Arbeiten als Bausteine einer kulturwissenschaftlichen Gesellschaftstheorie gedient (Rolshoven 2021).

Doch ganz so einfach und direkt ist das Verhältnis zwischen Buch, Erkenntnisvermittlung und Theoriebildung nicht. Es ist von Brüchen und Mäandern gezeichnet und vor allem von der assoziativen Spurensuche eines einkreisenden Denkens, das Feminismus und Strukturalismus vorgezeichnet haben. Interessanter als die konkreten Buchinhalte hier wiederzugeben (nach wie vor empfiehlt sich die voreingenommene Originallektüre), ist es, vor dem Hintergrund des in der Nachfolge der „Volkskunde" kritischen, historisch-genetischen Wissenschaftsverständnisses der Empirischen Kulturwissenschaft und Kulturanthropologie den Ursprüngen und Kontexten von Bollnows Denken nachzuspüren, vor allem seinen aufschlussreichen transnationalen, transdisziplinären und schließlich auch ideologischen Verknüpfungen. Eine solche detektivische Arbeit vermengt die Mechanismen und Wege des intellektuellen Denkens mit den Zeitläuften und ihren Brandzeichen. Sie erlaubt es, zu „Feld-Effekten" (Bourdieu 1988: 12) vorzudringen, welche die Buchinhalte relativieren.

Bollnows Raumanthropologie bezieht, gleich Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung* (1945) ihre wichtigsten Erkenntnisse aus der empirisch-anthropologisch und phänomenologisch orientierten transnationalen Psychiatrie der 1920er Jahre. Hier ist ein interessanter internationaler Konnex von Psychoanalyse, Philosophie, Anthropologie, Pädagogik, Psychologie und Psychopathologie wirksam. Ausgehend von einer „Vielheit räumlicher Orientierungen" (Bernhard Waldenfels), wie sie bei psychisch Kranken beobachtet wurde, eröffnen sie neue Denkfelder in der Konzeption einer Raumtheorie und bahnen neue Wege in unterschiedlichen Disziplinen. Die Impulse dieses Kreises waren weitreichend. Unter den zentralen Protagonisten lässt sich der Schweizer Ludwig Binswanger (1881–1966) nennen, an den Michel Foucault 1954 mit einer eminenten Schrift anknüpfte, ferner Erwin Straus (1891–1975) und Karlfried von Dürckheim (1896–1988) in Deutschland, Gaston Bachelard (1884–1962), Eugène Minkowski (1885–1972) und Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961) in Frankreich oder auch Franco Basaglia (1924–1980) in Italien.

Ein irritierendes Detail dieser Rezeptionsgeschichte ist die ideologische Spaltung innerhalb dieses Kreises in Vertreter eines kritischen Gesellschaftsbegriffes einerseits und anderseits in Anhänger einer mythifizierenden ontologischen Seinslehre, die zu engagierten Anhängern des Faschismus wurden. Zu letzteren zählen insbesondere der in Philosophie und Architektur bis heute höchst einflussreiche Martin Heidegger, aber auch Karlfried von Dürckheim und Otto Friedrich Bollnow. Als engagierter Hitleranhänger war Bollnow SA-Mitglied, seit 1940 NSDAP-Mitglied, gehörte dem „Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur" an und bekannte sich in seinen Schriften zur „nationalsozialistischen Revolution".

Die Frage, die sich mir als Bollnowleserin hier stellt, ist: Wie können Gesellschaftswissenschaftler*innen damit umgehen, wenn zentrale Episteme ihres im Sinne der Frankfurter Schule (ideologie)kritischen Denkens in ambivalente Entstehungs- oder Rezeptionskontexte involviert sind? Was, wenn, im Extremfall, brillante und innovative Impulse von Wissenschaftler*innen stammen, die aktiv in

Unrechtsregimen gewirkt haben, wenn „Genie und Niedertracht" (Thomas Assheuer) ineins gehen? Geht es hier um Fragen der Wissenschaftsethik, der Wissenschaftsgeschichte, oder geht es um Epistemologie? Geht es um Fragen des individuellen Ermessens im Umgang mit wissenschaftlichen Referenzen oder um Fragen gesellschaftlicher Tragweite, um Rechtsfragen sogar? Und: Lässt sich der maßgeblich von Deutschland ausgehende Faschismus in Europa als historische Periode zwischen 1933 und 1945 begreifen, die sich von einem 1963 erschienen Buch loslösen und verdrängen lässt, oder muss er im Sinne der Formulierung Umberto Eco's vom „ewigen Faschismus" (2020) als zeitübergreifendes Phänomen oder sogar immanenter Bestandteil der Moderne weitergedacht werden? Ich versuche, hier einen Denkweg zu skizzieren, der sich an einer Konstellationsanalyse orientiert.

Wissenschaftsgeschichtlich ist es unabdingbar zu verfolgen, wie sich die Wissenschaften der Lebensweltnähe, die „Wirklichkeitswissenschaften", die wir vertreten und die sich mit Körper, Bewegung, Wahrnehmung, Sinnen und Emotionen befassen, mit der Welt der Subjekte, der Subjektivitäten, des Subjektiven im Kontext ihrer Zeitgenossenschaften aufgestellt und entwickelt haben. Die nationalistische Volkstumsideologie, die nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg in allen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen, in Politik, Wissenschaften, Künsten, Literatur usw. an Terrain gewonnen hatte und letztlich in grausamen, bis heute folgenreichen Vernichtungsfeldzügen gegen das Andere, das „Unwerte", das „Abartige", das „Fremde" mündete, bot diesen Wissenschaften fruchtbaren Boden, Aufwertung, Raum, Positionen und Gelegenheiten. Die Dialektik von Ideologie und Wissenschaft lässt sich in keiner politischen Zeit umgehen und erfordert die Notwendigkeit einer kompromisslosen kritischen Wissenschaft. Theodor W. Adorno und Pierre Bourdieu haben unter anderem am Beispiel der Werke von Martin Heidegger und Otto F. Bollnow aufgezeigt, inwieweit Sprache zentrales Instrument und auch zentraler Parameter in der Untersuchung dieser Affinitäten ist. Ein „Jargon der Eigentlichkeit" (Adorno 1964) durchzieht das Werk der genannten deutschsprachigen Autoren Heidegger, Bollnow und Dürckheim: die redundante Rede vom „Wesen", vom „Dasein", der „Seinserfahrung", dem „in-der-Welt-Sein des Leibes", dem „inneren Werk", „der Urform" …. Wir treffen auf dichte, sich wiederholende Wortfolgen, „Worte", so Adorno, „die klingen, als ob sie Höheres sagten, als was sie bedeuteten" (1964: 9). Ihre mythifizierende Zweideutigkeit – Bourdieu spricht von einem „scheelen Denken" (1988: 9–15) – entzieht sich der Realitätsprüfung und enthebt sie alles Gesellschaftlichen, in dem Macht und Ungleichheit die strukturierenden Prinzipien sind. Adornos und Bourdieus Sprachkritik am „Jargon der Eigentlichkeit", der „Sein" und „Wesen" fokussiert, übt eine Denk-Kritik, die offenlegt, dass „Sein und Zeit" ebenso wie „Mensch und Raum" im Grunde an der Phänomenologie als Lehre von den Erscheinungen, von Mensch*en* und Räum*en* vorbeizielen muss. Eine „Ontologie" der mythischen „Ur-Wahrheit" (Eco 2020: 31), der das verführerische Potenzial des Numinosen innewohnt und deren Basis die ideologische Unschärfe ist, bleibt dominantes Moment eines „ewigen Faschismus" (28).

Dies offenbart nicht zuletzt auch das Werk prominenter raumtheoretisch arbeitender Zeitgenossen von Heidegger und Bollnow. Zu nennen ist hier Gaston Bachelard als Vorreiter einer politischen, reflexiven und grundsätzlich feministischen Wissenschaftsforschung, die aufzeigt, wie der handlungsorientierte Alltagsraum in Zeiten der Krise zu einem politischen Raum wird. Zu nennen sind hier weiterhin Emmanuel Lévinas Kritik der Ontologie, Henri Lefebvre‘s marxistische Raum- und Alltagskritik, Maurice Merleau-Ponty's poetische Erschließung einer Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung, aber auch die feministische Philosophie von Elisabeth List und das alltags- und gesellschaftskritische Werk von Bernhard Waldenfels. Sie veranschaulichen die möglichen Denkimpulse einer gesellschaftsorientierten Phänomenologie für die Kulturanthropologie, der nicht ein essentialisierendes Menschenbild zugrunde liegt, sondern ethische und politische Prinzipien, die Fragen der menschlichen Existenz und der Alltagswahrnehmung nicht über Sprache und Denken entwirklichen und essenzialisieren.

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Das Puppenhaus

Heidi Rosenbaum

Vor gut 25 Jahren, kurz nachdem ich an das damalige Seminar für Volkskunde (heute: Institut für Kulturanthropologie/Europäische Ethnologie) in Göttingen berufen wurde, habe ich im Rahmen einer Veranstaltung zum Wandel der Familie eine Exkursion in das Germanische Nationalmuseum Nürnberg angeboten. Dort wollten wir uns u.a. die Puppenhäuser anschauen, die einen Einblick in vormoderne Lebensverhältnisse bieten sollten. Puppenhäuser gab es außer in süddeutschen Städten auch in anderen europäischen Ländern; Vorläufer existierten im Adel, der sie als Objekte für die ‚Kunstkammern' anfertigen ließ (Wilckens 1978: bes. 7–13). Ich hatte sie noch nie gesehen, sondern nur darüber gelesen. Der Eindruck war für uns alle überwältigend! Von einer sehr engagierten Führerin wurde uns das aus dem Jahre 1639 stammende Stromersche Puppenhaus (Abb. 1) ausführlich vorgestellt und erläutert. Mindestens eine gute Stunde haben wir der Führerin gebannt zugehört, die uns anhand des Puppenhauses das Leben in einer wohlhabenden bürgerlichen Kaufmannsfamilie in der Freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg entfaltete.

Was ist ein Puppenhaus? Bei einem Puppenhaus handelt es sich um einen Längsschnitt durch ein Haus in der Größe eines zweitürigen Schranks. Das Stromersche Puppenhaus, das hier im Zentrum der Betrachtung steht, ist ca. 260 cm hoch, 150 cm breit und hat eine Tiefe von gut 60 cm (Müller 2006: 131; s. bes. 24–71). Schon an diesen Ausmaßen lässt sich erkennen, dass das Puppenhaus kein Kinderspielzeug gewesen ist, anders als die auch heute noch verbreiteten Puppenstuben, die erst ab Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts nachgewiesen sind (Wilckens 1978: 61). Vielmehr handelte es sich um Anschauungsmaterial für die Erziehung der heranwachsenden Töchter bürgerlicher Familien.

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Abb. 1: Das Stromersche Puppenhaus im Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg

Ihnen wurden anhand des Puppenhauses die Ausstattung eines Haushalts sowie die Arbeits- und Lebensformen ihres sozialen Milieus vermittelt. Ein Puppenhaus diente der Vorbereitung auf ihre künftige Rolle als Hausherrin eines derartigen Haushalts. Nur sehr wohlhabende bis reiche Bürger, also eine Minderheit des städtischen Bürgertums, waren in der Lage, sich ein Puppenhaus nach ihren Vorstellungen anfertigen zu lassen. Während frühere Interpretationen davon ausgingen, dass die Puppenhäuser Abbilder realer Häuser bzw. Haushalte seien, wird heute die Vorbildfunktion betont. Mit anderen Worten: Bei den Puppenhäusern handelt es sich um idealtypische Konstruktionen, in denen zentrale Eigenschaften bürgerlicher Häuser und Haushalte zusammengestellt sind, die in der Realität nicht immer gleichzeitig vorhanden waren. Gleichwohl wird man davon ausgehen können, dass die Auftraggeber zumindest teilweise den eigenen Haushalt abgebildet wissen wollten.

Was zeigt uns das Stromersche Puppenhaus? Auf vier Ebenen präsentiert es das idealtypische Haus bzw. den Haushalt der Familie eines wohlhabenden bürgerlichen Kaufmanns aus Nürnberg. Die Aufteilung der Etagen mit zwei niedrigen Ebenen im Keller bzw. im Erdgeschoss und zwei weiteren mit höheren Räumen sowie einem mittig gelegenen großzügigen Treppenhaus entspricht dem Bau frühneuzeitlicher Bürgerhäuser, die Zahl und Anordnung der Räume allerdings nicht: Weil die Häuser tatsächlich tiefer waren, konnten die nach hinten liegenden Räume entweder nicht gezeigt oder mussten, sofern sie wichtig waren, vorne zur Schauseite platziert werden.

Im Keller- bzw. Erdgeschoss sieht man vier Räume: Stall, Vorratsraum, Kontor und Waschküche, in der darüber liegenden Ebene Speisekammer, Kammer für die Knechte, Kinderstube und die Kammer für die Dienstmädchen. In der ersten Etage mit den höheren Räumen sind die Wohnstube und jenseits des Treppenhauses die reich ausgestattete Küche mit offenem Herd und Rauchfang sowie im Treppenhaus, etwas verborgen, der Zugang zum sog. ‚heimlich gemach', der Toilette. In der oberen Etage sind die Schlafstube des Paares und die ‚Prachtstube' untergebracht. Im geräumigen Treppenhaus ist Platz für große Wäscheschränke und Kommoden.

Das Besondere dieses Puppenhauses besteht neben der Aufteilung und Anordnung der Räume in ihrer Ausstattung. Sie entspricht ziemlich exakt der Sachkultur bürgerlicher Haushalte in der Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts und ist nahezu vollständig erhalten. Nürnberger Handwerker stellten Zinngeräte, Gläser, Bestecke und Möbel außer in den Normalmaßen auch im Miniaturformat her, sei es als Spielzeug oder für die Ausstattung von Puppenhäusern (Wilckens 1978: 14). Das Stromersche Puppenhaus enthält um die 1000 Einzelgegenstände (Müller 2006: 29), von Bestecken und Tellern über Wäsche, Betten und Bettzeug sowie Vorhängen bis zu Geschäftsbüchern. Das heißt, an dem Puppenhaus lässt sich bürgerliches Wohnen und bürgerliche Wohnkultur nicht nur in groben Zügen, sondern bis in Detail ablesen. Man sieht, welche Tischwäsche benutzt wurden, welches Geschirr und welche Töpfe zur Kücheneinrichtung gehören, welche und wie viele Wäschestücke in den Schränken sein sollten. Die BetrachterInnen können sich vom Leben in

diesem Milieu und dieser Zeit ein genaues Bild machen. In den 1990er Jahren hatten die Puppenhäuser im Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg ihren Platz deshalb noch in der Ausstellung zur bürgerlichen Wohnkultur der Frühen Neuzeit; seit 2002 sind sie in der Spielzeugsammlung untergebracht. Ob diese „moderne Sehweise" (Großmann in Müller 2006: 9) ihnen gerecht wird, lässt sich bezweifeln.

Was lässt sich nun unter kulturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive an diesem Stück Sachkultur erkennen?

1. Bei der Vorbereitung der Töchter auf ihre künftige Rolle wurde der Anschauung anhand der Puppenhäuser eine große Bedeutung beigemessen, denn Anschaffung und Ausstattung dieses ‚Lehrmittels' waren relativ teuer (Wilckens: 14–17). Gelehrtes Wissen hatte vermutlich, wie zeitgenössische Beobachter registrierten, eine geringe Bedeutung (ebd.).

2. Im Stall stehen nicht nur die für ein Handelshaus notwendigen Pferde, sondern auch eine Kuh – ein Hinweis auf den im 17. Jahrhundert und weit darüber hinaus umfänglichen Grad der Selbstversorgung auch im Milieu des wohlhabenden Stadtbürgertums. Für die Vorratshaltung dienten die Fässer und weiteren Behältnisse in dem daneben liegenden Raum und in einem zweiten in der darüber liegenden Ebene. Das Kontor des Kaufmanns befindet sich im Haus. Arbeit und Wohnen sind noch unter einem Dach. Das Kontor, zugleich Verkaufsraum, enthält alles, was für den Handelsbetrieb notwendig war: die Waren, einen Verkaufstisch, Geschäftsbücher, eine Waage, eine Geldkassette. Die vorhandenen Handelswaren und Vorräte zeugen von der Einbindung der Nürnberger Kaufleute in umfassende, auch globale Handelsbeziehungen.

3. Das Dienstpersonal, Knechte und Mägde, wohnte mit im Haus. Der Raum für das weibliche Personal befindet sich neben dem Kinderzimmer, das neben einem zweischläfrigen Bett u.a. mit einem Kinderbett und einem Gestell zum Laufenlernen ausgestattet ist (Abb. 2). Diese räumliche Anordnung ist vermutlich kein Zufall, sondern verweist darauf, dass das Personal in die Kinderaufzucht involviert war. Unterstützt wird dieser Eindruck durch einiges Kinderspielzeug im Zimmer der Mägde. Das Kruzifix dort lässt vermuten, dass das Hauspersonal aus dem katholischen Umland kam und seinen Glauben auch im protestantischen Nürnberg praktizieren konnte.

4. Der Wohnraum in der ersten Etage enthält neben dem zu erwartenden Interieur mit Tisch, Stühlen, Kommode und Kachelofen ein ausladendes, mit Vorhängen versehenes Himmelbett. Schlafen und Wohnen, lässt sich daraus schließen, waren (noch) keine strikt getrennten Bereiche. Beides ließ sich auch in vornehmeren Häusern durchaus verbinden.

5. An der „Prachtstube", in der die Gäste empfangen wurden, lässt sich das Repräsentationsbedürfnis der Angehörigen dieses wohlhabenden Bürgertums ablesen. Sie ist ein Vorläufer des bürgerlichen Salons des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts, ein Raum, der wiederum als ‚gute Stube' bis ins Arbeitermilieu des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts hinein verbreitet war. Es existierte also schon eine Differenzierung zwischen intimer und formeller, repräsentativer Geselligkeit.



Abb. 2: Der Raum für das weibliche Personal im Stromerschen Puppenhaus

6. Die Einrichtungen und Gebrauchsgegenstände zeugen vom Stand Nürnberger Handwerkstechnik in der Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Das Puppenhaus eröffnet dadurch einen Zugang zur Sachkulturanalyse dieser Zeit. Das gilt in Sonderheit für die alltäglichen Gebrauchsgegenstände dieses Zeitraums, die zu einem großen Teil verloren gegangen und nur im Puppenhaus ‚bewahrt' worden sind (Wilckens 1978: 18). Allerdings zeigt es eben mehr als nur die Sachkultur. Zwar entspricht die Zahl und Anordnung der Räume nicht vollständig der Realität großer Kaufmannshäuser dieses Zeitraums. Dennoch lassen sich aus dem Puppenhaus Rückschlüsse auf das Zusammenleben der Personen und – partiell – ihre Mentalität ziehen. Darin liegt m.E. der große Unterschied zwischen der Analyse einzelner Objekte, wie sie in der Sachkulturforschung weiterhin dominiert (Mohrmann 2001: 140-142), und der eines ganzen Ensembles wie dem Puppenhaus, das zugleich Hinweise auf die Prozesse des Wohnens und Arbeitens gibt.

7. Die Erkenntnis, dass man nur sieht, was man weiß, gilt allerdings auch hier. Aus der Betrachtung des Puppenhauses allein lassen sich noch keine weitreichenden Schlüsse über das Leben in einem derartigen Haus ziehen. Sie muss ergänzt werden durch die Auswertung weiterer in Frage kommender Quellen: sozialhistorische Beschreibungen und Analysen, biographische Quellen und andere Ego-Dokumente sowie in Frage kommende Archivalien. Erst aus allen zusammen ergibt sich ein stimmiges Bild, das durch die Anschauung des Puppenhauses eines besondere Qualität erhält.

Die Begegnung mit dem Stromerschen Puppenhaus war nicht nur für die Studierenden, sondern auch für mich beeindruckend. Ich bin in einem Fach, der Soziologie, sozialisiert worden, in dem die Analyse sozialer Beziehungen im Zentrum steht und dies normalerweise ohne den Zusammenhang mit der dinglichen Welt, in und mit der die Beziehungen stattfinden. Soziale Beziehungen sind jedoch (fast) immer über Dinge vermittelt. Umgekehrt gilt auch: In den Dingen ist nicht nur, aber auch Soziales festgeschrieben; in ihnen sind soziale Strukturen geronnen. Zwar ist besonders durch Bourdieu (1987) die Einbeziehung materieller Objekte in die soziologische Analyse vorangetrieben worden. Als generelle Tendenz hat sie sich jedoch bislang nicht durchgesetzt.

Als jemand, die früh den Zugang zur historischen Forschung gefunden hat, bin ich bereits in den späten 1960er Jahren durch die Lektüre von Norbert Elias (1969a) auf die Bedeutung von Sachkultur aufmerksam geworden, speziell auf den Zusammenhang von Wohnen und Wohnstrukturen mit den sozialen Beziehungen der Akteure. Elias hatte die Analyse des Grundrisses eines Pariser Adelspalais' zusammen mit anderen Quellen zu einer einprägsamen Darstellung der Ehebeziehung im höfischen Adel verbunden (1969b). Häuser und Wohnungen sind also einerseits der gleichsam verdinglichte Ausdruck der Vorstellungen von Wohnen. Dort, wo sie, die Wohnungen, den Menschen vorgegeben werden, legen sie bestimmte Verhaltensweisen zumindest nahe. In diesem Fall lassen sich aus der mehr oder weniger kreativen Nutzung des Hauses oder der Wohnung Rückschlüsse auf soziale Bedürfnisse und das soziale Leben ziehen. Das ist der Grund, weshalb ich Wohnen

und Wohnverhältnisse in weiteren Untersuchungen berücksichtigt habe. Allerdings mangelt es bei Studien über historische Lebensverhältnisse normalerweise am Zugang zu Häusern bzw. Wohnungen einschließlich der originalen Einrichtungen, die Hinweise auf die Nutzung durch die Bewohner geben. Hauptsächlich für die ländliche Bevölkerung bieten Freilichtmuseen einiges Anschauungsmaterial. In historischen Museen sind außer einzelnen Objekten gelegentlich ein bürgerliches Wohnzimmer oder die typische Arbeiterküche vorhanden. Der Prozess des Wohnens muss daher bei historischen Studien vor allem aus anderen schriftlichen oder mündlichen Quellen rekonstruiert werden und bleibt daher naturgemäß relativ blass und abstrakt (Mohrmann 2001: 142f.). Umso bemerkenswerter war für mich deshalb die Begegnung mit dem Stromerschen Puppenhaus. Das meiste, das ich mir bis dahin an Kenntnissen über die frühbürgerliche Familie angeeignet hatte, präsentierte es anschaulich. Dadurch lernte ich eine ganz andere, sinnliche Art wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens kennen, die mir bis dahin nicht geläufig war und mir den Zugang zu meinem neuen Fach, der Europäischen Ethnologie, erleichterte. In ihm ist die Berücksichtigung von Sachkultur verbreitet, allerdings, wie Mohrmann feststellte, mit einem Fokus auf Haus und Mobiliar, weniger auf dem Zusammenleben der Bewohner (142). Gerade die Verbindung von beidem aber macht m.E. eine gelungene kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung aus. Das Stromersche Puppenhaus bietet dafür einen hervorragenden Zugang.

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“Born a Fish, Raised a Fish, Now a Shrimp”: Reflections on “Kosher Shrimp” while Reading Alan Dundes

Hagar Salamon

Alan Dundes’s extensive scholarly contribution is replete with distinctive research intuitions. While his work stands out for demonstrating the ongoing relevance of the psychoanalytic approach for the study of folklore, for me, the appeal of his scholarly output lies already in the stimulating choice of research topics.

The inspiration for the present reading was sparked by Dundes’s book *The Shabbat Elevator and Other Sabbath Subterfuges: An Unorthodox Essay on Circumventing Custom and Jewish Character* (2002). Dundes opens with a personal recollection. Staying at a hotel in Israel he was attracted by the sign “Shabbat elevator.” Approaching the receptionist for an explanation, he was informed that it was “for our Orthodox patrons. ... They are not allowed to push elevator buttons on the Sabbath and so we always assign Orthodox visitors who are here over the Sabbath to rooms on one of the first three floors because the Shabbat elevator is set to stop automatically at each of these floors” (p. xi). The answer, which most likely was communicated in a straightforward way, provoked in Dundes a fit of wild laughter, which I interpret as a combination of parody and appreciation. The experience inspired him to write an entire book, on the creativity by which halakhic (Jewish religious law) authorities provide permissible circumventions to bypass commandments and prohibitions in a kosher manner. Such bypasses have accumulated within halakha throughout the ages, and are constantly adjusted (Katz 1989).

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Coming from a secular background, it was only after moving to Jerusalem for my academic studies that I encountered the gamut of these practices and their elaborate folk creativity. While I have long grown accustomed to Shabbat elevators, nothing I had previously seen could have prepared me to the bowl of shrimps—known to be unkosher as defined by the Bible—served at a dinner reception hosted by Jewish observant friends, along with the reassurance that all the dishes are 100% kosher. That dinner reception was held in a private home in 1996, on the occasion of a one-month stay in Jerusalem of anthropologist Mary Douglas, whose influential work *Purity and Danger* (1966) is inspired by biblical food laws. Mary Douglas participated in a seminar focusing on her structural approach to biblical food laws organized by the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem. The guests were anthropologists, folklorists, and biblical scholars. The general atmosphere was informal and welcoming, and became remarkably cheerful when a large glass bowl with elegantly arranged and perfect-looking shrimps was brought to the table. That evening, as I remember to this day, we all tasted and marveled about the "kosher shrimp" creation, and the virtuosity it embodied. Everyone agreed that the kosher shrimp perfectly matched the guest's field of research.

The laws defining *kosher* and *treif* (forbidden to eat) in Judaism are beyond the scope of the present short reading. It is important to emphasize that the creature known as shrimp is not only forbidden to eat (*Leviticus* 11:10), but has, in addition to pork, become a symbol of the abhorrence to non-kosher food. Thus, the rabbinic certification "kosher" on the shrimp guarantees it is molded to the shape of a shrimp from kosher fish (and lately also lab-grown vegetarian shrimp) thus allowing its consumption by observant Jews. This case demonstrates the tolerance to eating an anomaly—in Douglas's terms—as long as it is kosher. However, for others, as we shall see, the sheer appearance of this kosher fish is considered a "danger."

Kosher food involves a complex web of prohibitions and permissions accompanied by argument and debate. Thus, it also appears as a central component of folk creativity in both practice and rhetoric. The "kosher shrimp" is a "disguised" culinary fantasy that gains increasing popularity (Dundes 2002, 77–78). The ironic perspective by which Dundes confronted similar intricacies and creative circumventions is particularly insightful. The following well-known joke is found in numerous versions. Presented by Dundes in some detail, it is linked metaphorically to the topic of kosher shrimp (Druyanow, vol. 2, no. 1418; Dundes 2002, 79–81). Here is a prototypical version (Newberger-Goldstein 2006: 127)::

A Jew has undergone a conversion process, in the course of which the priest has put his hands on the Jew's head and repeated several times: "You were a Jew, now you are a Christian, you were a Jew, now you are a Christian." A few weeks pass and the priest comes on a Friday to see how his *converso* is getting on. The priest finds, to his shock and dismay, that the New Christian is not eating fish for his Friday night dinner, as he ought to as a good Catholic, but rather a roaster chicken. The Jew, ordered to account for himself, explains that he had simply put his hand

on the chicken's head and repeated several times, 'You were a chicken, now you are a fish! You were a chicken, now you are a fish! You are a fish!'"

Other versions typically build on parallel speech acts:

> The Jew agrees to convert. Three times the priest sprinkles holy water over him, declaring: "Born a Jew, raised a Jew, now a Catholic." … The ex-Jew walks over to the sink, wets his hands, approaches the table and sprinkles the chicken three times, saying, "Born a chicken, raised a chicken, now a fish!" (Eller)

Both the joke and the kosher shrimp rely upon inspiring paradoxes with "disguised conversions" at their center. The joke, focusing on the conversion from Judaism to Christianity, may be interpreted differently by various audiences. Told among Jews, the joke caricatures the brevity and seeming superficiality of conversion to Christianity. At the same time, it solidifies—through food traditions—the notion that a Jew cannot become a Christian, and as Dundes suggests, "that once a Jew, always a Jew. Despite the trappings of Catholicism, a Jew can no sooner become a Catholic than a chicken can become a fish" (2002, 80). But perhaps most of all, the joke brings to humorous absurdity the halakhic virtuosity, known in Hebrew as *pilpul*. These pathways are simultaneously articulated in the joke and stimulate further reflections on the marvel of such creations as kosher shrimp.

Creating kosher shrimp may be perceived as a transformation mirroring the conversion of chicken to fish. The joke is based on the parallel between the conversion ritual to Christianity—sprinkling holy water accompanied by a specific speech act—and the proclamation that the chicken is now a fish. With this logic in mind, kosher shrimp can be seen as a counter direction transformation in that it looks "Christian" but is actually "Jewish".

In light of these intuitions, it is revealing to discover on the internet lively discussions surrounding kosher shrimp. The internet is a rich sea to fish in for further nuances of refractions of "kosher talk". Here, only a small portion of the catch can be presented.

In a Hebrew blog devoted to kosher food and visual impressions, the author, an observant Jew, quotes his non-observant Jewish companion (Stanger). As the two met for a joint meal at a kosher restaurant, the friend said he could not understand how the rabbinate allows the sale of kosher shrimp, even providing them with kosher certificate: "Listen … they take a kind of fish … process it and bring into it the precise taste of shrimp. Believe me," he reiterated, "the precise taste of shrimp, since, unlike you, I have eaten and will eat many shrimps. … and if this is not enough, even a shape of a shrimp they created out of that fish. And if this is not *marit ayin* of an actual shrimp, I don't know what *marit ayin* is." *Marit ayin* (Appearance to the eye) is a halakhic concept, regarding specific actions that might appear to be a violation of Jewish law, although they are perfectly permissible. Consequently, certain practices are themselves avoided for that reason alone.

Other forums express clear cut sentiments of disgust at the very appearance of kosher shrimp. An article published in 2016 entitled "At last, a kosher prawn (after 3,500 years)," opens with the statement "Since God's law was handed down to Moses, religious Jews could only look with longing at a plateful of delicious prawns or shrimp—forbidden as non-kosher according to their strict dietary laws." A London rabbi is then quoted saying that although technically it is kosher, there are "some moral questions that need to be answered. Firstly, is it right to get around the Jewish tradition in this way? Secondly, there is the problem of giving the wrong impression. … So it's probably better not to eat fake shrimp. We've survived 3,000 years without it and I'm sure that we can continue to get by." (Adams)

A Hebrew article (Nechtigel), based on the above opens the discussion reassuring the reader that according to the manufacturers the product is "shrimp for all purposes—but strictly kosher." It also quoted rabbis who stress that "one should consider the 'appearance' and the 'feeling' of eating something similar to eating a *sherets* (a creeping creature; vermin) forbidden by the Torah." Passionate responses followed: "As if there is a lack of delicious and quality things that are kosher. I will be paid and I will not taste this kosher shrimp, ugh, it seems repulsive;" "Only the worthless will eat of it: Why the hell should a religious Jew eat a food that looks like vermin? It testifies to the inwardness of the consumer: that he would have been happy to unload every yoke and imitate the Gentiles in all their ways. … It is clear without a shadow of a doubt that anyone who eats this abominable thing (albeit kosher) is abominable in his own virtues and faith;" "If eating is forbidden then what is the point of 'cloning' forbidden food? One might think that there is nothing else in the world to eat … so a few things are forbidden, nothing will happen to anyone if he holds back and overcomes and does not eat. Not everything should be imitated in trying to get as close to the Gentiles as possible, that is exactly what sets us apart from them.

As indicated by these examples, most of these discussions circle around two features—appearance and taste. For the present foray into these discussions let me add two final voices, both of which acknowledge the craving for the forbidden:

In a sermon delivered by the organization *Hidavrut*, intended for the dissemination of religious oriented ideas broadcasted in their internet channel, the subject of the sermon was unkosher, yet craved for foods (Cohen): "Every dish that the Torah forbade—it gave in return the same dish in a kosher version. … there is nothing that God forbade eating and did not give a permissible version!" When relating specifically to the matter of shrimps, the rabbi explained that instead of these disgusting "sea insects" there is an authenticated kosher formula for exactly the same taste, created by smearing peanut butter on a Salmon fish and roast it. Presto "that fish has the exact taste of shrimp. …So you can see: there is nothing that the Blessed One forbade, and did not give it in permissible manner!"

While the above assertions are intended to separate taste from appearance, other voices, such as that of a liberal orthodox rabbi contend with both the appearance and the taste of non-kosher foods (Duvdevani). Relying upon previous rabbinical

commentators he concludes, "we at the rabbinate who are dealing with kosher issues, must provide as wide a range of kosher options as possible … otherwise, if there is no imitation there is a fear that the lust to taste will entice people to seek out for the forbidden itself … and in this way to increase the status of kosher attractiveness."

At this point one can say that the end meets the beginning in the exploratory interpretive circle opened up by Dundes. The vivid discussions surrounding this (and other) forms of prima facie "treif" foods in a rapidly developing food industry, definitely relates to issues of identity, separating Orhtodox Jews from others, and Jews in general from other ethnic categories in the US and beyond. In the discourse around kosher shrimp, purity and danger emerge as an intricate web of negotiations full of disguises and contradictions, jokes, tongue in cheek, and winks of the eye, rather than a clear cut system of classification in a biblical severity. Reading Dundes and listening to the multi-vocal discourses in the field of the internet have become a productive amplification for *Purity and Danger*.

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Françoise Jullien, *The Silent Transformations*

Cristina Sánchez-Carretero

When I was invited to write an essay about a work that would have impacted me, at first I thought "impossible, I don't have time". The feeling of "not having time" is indeed one of the silent transformations that have taken over the academic world in recent times. I gave it a second thought and decided to write precisely about Françoise Jullien and his book *The Silent Transformations*. In recent years, I am reading fewer and fewer works with the potential to leave a mark, to have an impact that produces changes. I think that this is so, in part, because of the neoliberal turn in academic production that causes articles to be produced in bulk, even from starting points of criticism of the neoliberal knowledge production system.

When this invitation came to me, the first work that came to my mind was *The Silent Transformations*.Although the book has marked my thinking since I first read it in 2015, I have only recently used it for the first time in my research. The present essay is based on an article in which I apply Jullien's concepts to reflect on the silent transformations of heritage regimes (Sánchez-Carretero 2022). I have used the Spanish translation of *The Silent Transformations* for the passages I quote (Jullien 2010a), but I include in the list of cited works its original version in French (Jullien 2009), and the translations into German (Jullien 2010b) and English (Jullien 2011). It is a short book of about 100 pages and it will not be difficult—for the interested reader—to find the passages that I translate from Spanish.

Jullien is a sinologist and philosopher who has centered his work on a difficult—I would even say impossible—issue: how to think the unthinkable. In order to make visible the gaps in thought, he proposes moving away from the philosophical models expressed in Indo-European languages because they reproduce models of

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thought that would not allow us to approach the unthinkable. Instead, Jullien focuses on pre-nineteenth century Chinese thought as expressed in philosophical texts—mostly on the writings of Laozi, Sunzi, Confucius, Mencius, and Zhuangzi, but also on the *Yi Jing*; and he comes to an interesting conclusion: the transformation itself would constitute one of these places of the unthinkable in Indo-European languages.

Jullien makes a trip back to pre-nineteenth century Chinese philosophical thought (where there was, for example, no word for time) to refocus on the themes of philosophy produced in Indo-European languages (especially Greek philosophy). According to him, "China" (Chinese thought/philosophy) allows distance to explore the unthinkable of Western thought, to question what is evident; and when seen from other philosophical systems is something surprising. In other words, he does not go to China in search of exoticism but in a pragmatic way, to use it as a platform from which to think about Europe.

In his book, *The Silent Transformations*, Jullien tries to understand changes, such as aging, through the moments in which the transformation becomes evident, but without an event that triggers it: these are the moments of the sudden. When a person looks in the mirror and, suddenly, sees the marks of the passage of time; she is not what she was and, at the same time, she is the same ... and everything ages: the look, the tone of the voice, the gesture:

> Growing we don't see growing: neither the trees, nor the children. But one day, when we look at them again, we are surprised that the trunk is already so thick or that the child already reaches our shoulders. Getting old: we don't see getting old. Not only because we age endlessly and aging is too progressive and continuous to be seen; but also because everything in us ages (Jullien 2010a: 11).

Jullien focuses on understanding the change itself, but without breaking the process into stages, without marking it with events. He considers, for example, how to analyze the processes in which something and its opposite are not excluded; furthermore, processes in which something and the opposite are already part of the same "being." For him, "preconceived ideas of being [in European thought] prevent us from thinking about transition" (27). Being and not being are acting at the same time; and in non-being there is already the beginning of being.

Jullien also speaks of the obsession with ontologies in philosophy expressed in Indo-European languages—without dialoguing with what in anthropology we know as an ontological turn. To understand the change, Greek philosophy—Aristotle, in particular—includes a third term between being and not-being: a substrate-subject; a "what changes" that would be below the opposites. That is, Aristotle introduces a new ontologizing term to refer to what happens between one and the other. As Jullien explains, "Chinese thought escapes this difficulty for the simple reason that it does not try to under-understand the third term, substrate-subject of change" (32). The transition is, from the point of view of the logos,

> the stumbling block of Greek thought; in it appears symptomatically what Greek thought is at a disadvantage: what it has devoted less to thinking, because it is less equipped to do so, to which, consequently, in Europe, we have paid less attention. "Disadvantage" that, of course, I can only measure from a distance: in this case in relation to the other possibility that I have just outlined and that is intensely exploited by Chinese thought (29).

I am going to go into more detail in two basic ideas of his proposal: the obsession with the events of what Jullien calls "European thought" and the concept of efficacy. According to Jullien, to enter into the knowledge of the transformations themselves, the important thing is not to understand the events, but to understand the silent transformation of the process. The adjective "silent" is essential because it focuses on what is not seen, not heard, but which is constantly changing:

> "Silent" is more exact than invisible, even more expressive. Because not only is this transformation not perceived, but it occurs without attracting attention, without alerting "in silence": without being noticed and independently of us; one would say that it does not want to bother us (12).

The change is not what occurs when its effects are seen, but it was already occurring from potentiality: this is what explains the transition from love to lack of love, for example; or the seasons, which follow one another without a strict limit: a lot happens and it seems that nothing happens.

Another key concept is "efficacy," which has to do with the idea of "building models" and progress. According to Greek thought, there must be an ideal model to approach to achieve goals. In other words, there is first a modeling and then an application; a willingness to implement. Research works in the same way, with objectives to be reached and a strategy to achieve them. Jullien uses the simile of war: generals—in what he calls "European thinking" —meet to set the ideal model of what they want to achieve and develop tactics to reach their goals:

> A common way of approaching efficacy, which was developed to a great extent by Greek philosophy, is to conceive an ideal form (eidos), something like a must-be, which is placed on a different plane, which sets itself as an objective (telos) and that serves as a model and a paradigm … but another way of considering efficacy, as read especially in the Arts of War of ancient China, is not by reconfiguring the situation on an ideal model that is placed on another plane and which is proposed as an end, but by maturing the existing conditions, in which the situation itself is involved. That is, to transform a given situation in such a way that it gradually leans towards the favorable direction (97–98).

Monuments are made for the good general in Europe if he has won a battle. The good general in pre-nineteenth century Chinese philosophical texts is the one who never gets a statue because there has been no battle to win. Ultimately, celebrating

the event has to do with the previous point because marking the concrete event as the turning point of a process is to put the emphasis on the event—not on the transformation itself—and on the "being" (hence the ontologizing obsession) of the event; seeing "the process" as a separate ontologized entity.

Jullien makes it very clear in his writings that he does not speak of contemporary China, but he uses books prior to the nineteenth century to see with different eyes the gaps, the silences, in what he calls "European thinking." It is precisely this two-block separation—Chinese thought versus European thinking—which makes Jullien's proposals so difficult to work with in our disciplines: how to apply ideas that start from a place of dichotomous thought that is one of the main bones of contention in anthropology and ethnology? Also, how to use notions that come from a dominant Chinese thought that has caused so many social inequalities? How not to deconstruct categories like "European thinking"? How not to make a decolonial and feminist critique inscribed in southern epistemologies of these expressions?

Jullien has also suffered this critique from other philosophers. Jean François Billeter, for instance, strongly criticizes his suggestions, to such an extent that he dedicates a book to the subject, entitled *Contre François Jullien* (2006). In this book, Billeter reproaches Jullien for speaking of China in this way because it means assuming a monolithic identity, denying, according to Billeter, the historicity and heterogeneity of China. Furthermore, Billeter harshly admonishes Jullien for reproducing an imperial ideology, accusing him that the republican French intellectuals are in tune with that imperial ideology. In turn, this heightened criticism of Billeter prompted Jullien's supporters, including Bruno Latour, Alain Badiou, sociologists like Philippe d'Iribarne, or psychoanalysts like Jean Allouch to write in support of Jullien (Allouch et al. 2007).

Leaving these controversies aside, I am interested in rescuing Jullien's thought as a metaphor to focus on the transformation itself, on the dialogue between order and chaos. Using the philosopher Javier Bustamante Donas' words, in Chinese practical philosophy, "it is not the Hegelian unfolding of being or the virtuous repetition of seasonal cycles that explains history, but this interwoven dance of order and chaos" (Bustamante Donas 2014: 30–35).

I have introduced the concept of "silent transformations" as a metaphor (not as a theoretical model) to counteract the ideology of rupture and the culture of events that has imperceptibly dominated certain ways of thinking (Jullien 2010a: 82); Also, to think from another angle what could be called "moments of the sudden." The moments that reveal the transformation itself, like writing this essay about Françoise Jullien.

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Olga Tokarczuk, *House of Day, House of Night*

Marie Sandberg

In her novel *House of Day, House of Night* (2003), the Polish writer and 2018 Nobel Laureate Olga Tokarczuk takes the reader to the Polish-Czech borderland, some years after the fall of Communism (see Sandberg 2020). The story depicts the local community in the small, southwestern Polish village of Nowa Ruda, in which the narrator settles with her husband. In one of the many stories interwoven in this fascinating novel, Tokarczuk portrays the German couple Peter Dieter and his wife Erika visiting Nowa Ruda, which appears to be Peter Dieter's childhood town. Nowa Ruda is situated in the historical province of Silesia—a region that has been under Bohemian, imperial German, Habsburg, Polish, Prussian, and later Nazi-German control. After WWII the region was allocated to Poland as a compensation for the Polish eastern territories annexed by the Soviet Union. The character Dieter could thus exemplify one of the many expelled Germans who had to flee when the Silesian province was returned to Poland due to the Potsdam Agreement of 1945.

During his memory tour, Dieter wants to take a hike in the mountains while his wife stays behind in the village. Like so many other German 'Heimweh-Touristen' or nostalgia tourists, Dieter is looking for signs and traces in the lost childhood landscape and he aims at an overview from the very top of the mountain. As it happens, Dieter has a heart attack climbing the trail, and he dies, lying directly on the Polish-Czech border, literally with one leg in Poland and the other in the Czech Republic. As dusk falls, Dieter is discovered by two Czech border guards. After identifying the body as a German, the border guards glance at their watches, then at each other. In silent agreement, they carefully slide Dieter's leg over to the Polish side of the border. They quickly leave the place. One hour later, two Polish border

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guards discover Dieter's dead body lying on Polish territory. After having identified the body too, "then, in devout silence, they grab the legs and arms and drag the body over to the Czech side of the border" (Tokarczuk 2003, 92).

This story about pushing a dead body back and forth across a political border, at the "Länder Dreieck" between Germany, Poland and the (since 1993) Czech Republic, evokes deeper historical issues about identity and belonging in this particular part of Europe (Wampuszyc 2014, 374). There is a strong symbolism in the way this German is pushed aside and away; he neither belongs here nor there. Tokarczuk's novel thus also deals with the complex relations of place and belonging—who belongs where is not an easy thing to decide in Silesia.

I first read Tokarczuk's novel while doing fieldwork for my ethnological PhD research in Lower Silesia, in close proximity to Tokarczuk's Nowa Ruda. Conducted in 2006, a few years after Poland joined the EU in 2004 and right before the country entered the Schengen agreement in 2007, my research focused on everyday Europeanisation in the twin towns of Görlitz and Zgorzelec. Originally one, the town was divided into a German and a Polish part by the new Oder-Neisse border of 1945, following the river Neisse. This historically burdened border topos thus made a vibrant laboratory for studying ideals of reconciliation, tolerance and cross-border activity in an enlarged EU (Sandberg 2016).

Tokarczuk's novel is fictitious, however reading novels related to my field of inquiry proved an important entrance into a more nuanced understanding of complex, historical issues of these borderlands. Along with a bricolage of ethnographic methods and materials, fiction such as literature can be used as a further tool for cultural analysis (Ehn, Löfgren, and Wilk 2015). Novels offer insights and perspectives on themes that can be strange, exotic, surprising, or blindingly familiar in relation to our usual understanding of things. As fieldworkers we engage with our research participants in order to better understand their worlds, their views, their struggles—and most often with changed self-perception as a result. Literature and the world of fiction provide similar self-moving entrances into the perspectives of fellow human beings across time and space.

In my research, Tokarczuk helped open up new understandings of the co-existence of different but related border logics in the European border regime, past and present (Sandberg 2018). There is a strong resemblance, for instance, between the dead body being pushed back and forth across the border in Tokarczuk's novel and the migrants of the Mediterranean Sea, who continue to drown even after the European 'refugee crisis' was redirected or moved elsewhere after the EU-Turkey agreement in 2016. In September 2015 the discovery of the body of the three-year-old Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi, washed up on the shores of Bodrum, embodied this mass death related to the refugee arrivals from Syria, Irak, and Afghanistan to Europe. Like Tokarczuk's border guards, the EU member states continuously push away the issue of migration, or the drowned bodies, back out into the waters, so to speak. The migrant mortalities of the Mediterranean give rise to similar unanswered questions: Whose trouble is it? Who should take responsibility of the dead bodies?

In recent decades the inner borders of the EU have dismantled from the outer edges of the nation states and diffused into European societies, not least due to new border technology, and surveillance techniques. The EU external borders on the other hand, have manifested themselves in even more concrete manners. Through so-called 'push-backs' the European border agency Frontex performs actions and maritime blockades at sea through which migrants are forcefully redirected and returned to where they came from.

Borders mark and divide not only territorial demarcations (so-called 'green lines') but also define who belongs where and why. For the same reason, this productive and performative character of the border has made it a keen object of ethnological investigation. The border situates itself in a permanent condition of ambiguity, because the border at one and the same time performs a line in the sand and can be porous and undefined. The absence and the presence of the border are thus two sides of the same coin.

The dead body on the Polish-Czech border represents a pre-Schengen Europe in which no convention would set the direction for cross-border police cooperation. However, despite the Schengen agreement being in force today, there are similarities between Tokarczuk's border and the current European border logics. For instance, until 2020 the Dublin regulation stipulated that asylum applications should be examined in first arrival countries, meaning the country in which the applicant is first registered. This regulation did not spur collective responsibility and cross-border cooperation among EU member states. Migration researchers Ninna Nyberg Sørensen and Thomas Gammeltoft Hansen (2013) have argued that the EU external border control based on rejection and push-backs creates not only new markets for defence equipment and border technology but produces a 'migration industry' which includes dubious border agencies, profit seeking middlemen and unscrupulous human smugglers.

While the German body on the Polish-Czech border remains an impossible body, pushed over to the one side and then to the other, the bodies of the migration industry are pushed aside and away from being anyone's problem and responsibility. The deceased migrants are salvaged by humanitarian activists in order to put them to rest, or they sink down on to the seabed remaining in the void between anyone's responsibility. Tokarczuk's novel thus inspired me to dig further into the multiplicity of ways that borders matter, while I was 'reading from the border.'

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Die Mittelstadt

Brigitta Schmidt-Lauber

Manche sagen, die Europäische Ethnologie sei eine *Erfahrungswissenschaft*. Zum einen begründet sich dies mit der Wahl des jeweiligen Forschungsgegenstands, denn wir scheinen wissenschaftlich (auch) unseren eigenen Interessen zu folgen, vermeintlichen Hobbys zu frönen oder persönliche Lebensumstände zum Ausgangspunkt von Forschungsvorhaben zu nehmen. Zum anderen ist auch mit Blick auf die Methode von einer Erfahrungswissenschaft die Rede und dies zweifelsohne mit Recht: Im ethnographischen Zugang sind (Mit)Erleben und teilnehmende Beobachtung wesentliche Vorgehensweisen kulturwissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisgewinnung, die die persönliche Erfahrung und das subjektive Wahrnehmen in den Status von Quellen erheben bzw. transferieren. Viele kluge Köpfe haben uns gelehrt, wie wichtig es ist, den eigenen Bezug zum Thema, die persönlichen Erfahrungen und Gefühle in die Analyse einzubeziehen und den Einfluss der subjektiven Perspektive auf die Fragestellung, Feldkonstitution und Interpretation zu berücksichtigen. Es verwundert insofern nicht, dass Gegenstandsfindung und Zugangsweise bei ethnographischen Vorhaben vielfach ineinander gehen und dabei Schlüsselerlebnisse und besondere Ereignisse Forschende auf die Spurensuche führen.

So erging es mir auf dem Hamburger Heiligengeistfeld in St. Pauli im Mai 2001, wo ich zufällig mitten in eine außergewöhnliche öffentliche Partystimmung geriet, weil die Ankunft der Fußballmannschaft des FC St. Pauli erwartet wurde: Der selbsternannte „Underdog der Liga“ hatte kurz vorher den Aufstieg in die 1. Bundesliga durch einen Sieg gegen den 1. FC Nürnberg geschafft. Die abends nach

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Hamburg zurückkehrenden Sportler wurden frenetisch in ausgelassener Atmosphäre gefeiert. Eine sympathische bunte Menge junger und älterer Menschen, Männer wie Frauen, Leute aus Hamburg oder anderswoher kam zusammen, deren gemeinsamen Nenner ich ohne Wissen über den Anlass niemals im Fußball vermutet hätte und deren überschwängliche Freude ansteckend wirkte. Das machte mich aufmerksam. Fortan spürte ich den Dynamiken der Fußballbegeisterung nach, um zu verstehen, was Menschen an diesem Spiel und diesem Club begeistert und wieso gefühlte Menschenmassen teils grölender Männer und einiger Frauen mit Fahnen, Schals und Bierdosen die Hamburger U-Bahnen im 14-tägigen Wechsel atmosphärisch einnehmen. Im Stadion am Millerntor differenzierte sich das Bild. Im Rahmen eines Studienprojektes fanden wir so verschiedene Interessierte, Atmosphären und Rezeptionsweisen des Spiels, wie die „Ultras" mit Aufsehen erregenden Choreographien, das „Familieneck" mit kindgerechter Einführung in das Spielgeschehen, die Fans mit langjähriger Dauermitgliedschaft auf überdachter Sitztribüne – vor Ort „Kuchenblock" genannt – oder die „VIP-Lounge" mit ihrer eigenen Klientel.

Es müssen aber mitnichten derart herausragende Ereignisse oder außerordentliche Erlebnisse sein, die uns in Bann ziehen und Forschungsfragen generieren. Oftmals sind es sogar gerade nicht die spektakulären Schlüsselmomente, die uns auf Forschungsthemen aufmerksam machen. Vielmehr und häufig handelt es sich um ein sukzessives Gewahrwerden eines Themas, oft zunächst das Bemerken einer Irritation, die Fragen aufwirft und den Blick fokussiert. Mein Einfinden in Göttingen 2006 nach Jahrzehnten in den Großstädten Hamburg und Wien bildete so eine Phase der Transformation und Anpassung an neue Lebensverhältnisse, die für mich neue Forschungsfragen auf den Plan rief. Die allmähliche Horizonterweiterung und Bewusstwerdung von Andersheiten, die der Transfer von Hamburg nach Göttingen 2006 für mich und meine Familie bedeuteten und die sich auch in neuen Untersuchungsfeldern spiegelten, versuche ich im Folgenden zu rekonstruieren.

Um dies vorwegzunehmen: Ergebnis meiner Sozialisation in das Göttinger Alltags- und Arbeitsleben ist ein bis heute anhaltendes Interesse an unterschiedlichen räumlichen, zunächst städtischen und nunmehr auch ländlichen Lebenszusammenhängen in ihren Bedingtheiten, Logiken und Dynamiken. Den Ausgangspunkt dieser Suchbewegung bildete die Frage nach dem Alltagsleben in der sogenannten Mittelstadt: Am Göttinger Institut für Kulturanthropologie/Europäische Ethnologie ethnographierten wir in einem Lehrforschungsprojekt mit MA-Studierenden das städtische Leben der „Mittelstadt Göttingen", was in der Folge Anlass für eine interdisziplinäre Konferenz in Göttingen sowie ein vergleichendes FWF-Forschungsprojekt bot, das ich nach meinem Wechsel an die Uni Wien entwickelte und verfolgte. Wie kam es zu diesem Forschungsinteresse?

Einleben in einer neuen Stadt ist ein aufregender, vielschichtiger Prozess, der die Wahrnehmung in sinnlich-körperlicher, emotionaler, sozialer und kognitiver Hinsicht sensibilisiert und prägt. *Dichte Erfahrung* möchte ich diesen besonderen

Wahrnehmungsmodus nennen. Zwei Spuren waren es, die sich dabei herauskristallisierten und mein Interesse an der Mittelstadt und darüber nach relationalen und pluralen städtischen Lebensrealitäten weckten. Zum einen waren dies nebensächlich scheinende Alltagserfahrungen, die zu Störgefühlen und Verhaltensunsicherheiten führten. Wenn ich etwa im Wartezimmer des Kinderarztes eine Studentin traf, die ebenfalls mit ihrem Kind zur Untersuchung kam, oder wenn ich im Schwimmbad der Supermarktverkäuferin oder einer administrativen Schlüsselperson des Präsidiums begegnete. Auf der Straße sah ich wiederum ungewohnt oft Gesichter, die ich noch nicht zuordnen konnte, wiewohl ich selbst mich erkannt fühlte und gegrüßt wurde. Sukzessive fand ich einen Umgang mit diesen Irritationen, die mir den städtischen Eindruck der relativen Überschaubarkeit bzw. geringeren Anonymität vermittelten, und passte meine Grußgewohnheiten den lokalen Verhältnissen an. Auch die alltäglichen Rhythmen und Routinen meiner neuen Umgebung fielen mir als ungewöhnlich auf, wenn Kolleg*innen in den persönlichen Tagesablauf vielfach einen Ortswechsel zwischen Wohnort und Arbeitsplatz einbauten, was mir bis dato nie in den Sinn gekommen wäre, aber angesichts der kurzen Wege und Dauer neue Optionen eröffnete. Auf manche der Irritationen folgte tatsächlich eine Änderung meiner habitualisierten Routinen alltäglichen Handelns.

Zum anderen waren es diskursive Auffälligkeiten, die sich zunehmend zu einer Fragelinie verdichteten. So ließ sich immer wieder in alltäglichen Situationen eine Dynamik des *Othering* erkennen, in der ich als aus Hamburg Kommende kritisch beäugt und ob meiner Haltung zu den Göttinger Verhältnissen geprüft wurde oder Vergleiche zwischen den beiden Städten angestellt bzw. Reflexionen der lokalen Spezifika evoziert wurden, die mich klar außerhalb positionierten. (Zweifelsohne lässt dieser Prozess eine soziale Dynamik erkennen, an der alle „Seiten" des *Othering* mitwirken.)

Mehr noch als solche Platzierungen in „wir" und/versus „sie", die gesellschaftlich in ganz unterschiedlichen Spielarten ohnehin unser Zusammenleben bestimmen und bestimmten, war es eine spezifische Rede über die eigene Stadt, ein ausgeprägter Diskurs über Göttingen als Lebens- und Wohnort, der mir immer wieder begegnete und neue Fragen aufwarf. Warum distanzierten sich so viele Akademiker*innen vom vorgeblich „langweiligen" Göttingen, und warum haben viele Kolleg*innen einen Zweitwohnsitz in der Großstadt – zumeist Berlin? Warum streben viele Göttinger Abiturient*innen im näheren oder ferneren Umfeld ein Studium oder Leben in einer Stadt wie Berlin, Hamburg oder Kopenhagen an, während Göttingen für andere eine ideale Stadt zum Studieren ist? Gerne wurde vor Ort Heinrich Heine, ein vormaliger Bewohner mit zwiespältigen Gefühlen der Residenzstadt gegenüber, zitiert, der in seiner *Harzreise* (1826) über Göttingen schrieb: „Die Stadt selbst ist schön, und gefällt einem am besten, wenn man sie mit dem Rücken ansieht." Die wöchentlichen und täglichen Bahnhofsfrequenzen bestätigten eine aus solcher Haltung resultierende Stadtflucht. Sie zeigten, wie sehr

das selbstverständliche und teils rhythmisierte Verlassen der Stadt sowie die Wiederkehr in vielen Lebensmodellen von Göttinger Bewohner*innen bestimmter Berufe und Lebensphasen habitualisiert sind. Zugleich gibt es aber genauso die Zufriedenen und die vehementen Verteidiger*innen der Stadt. Mitunter klangen die Ortsbeschreibungen dann im Überzeugungston, wenn die „Überschaubarkeit" und „Sicherheit" der Stadt, die „Nähe zur Natur", die „kurzen Wege" und das „trotzdem" vorhandene kulturelle oder materielle Angebot gelobt wurden – ein Spektrum an Qualitäten und Zuschreibungen, das besonders, aber nicht nur ältere Menschen und Familien (zumal mit kleineren Kindern) zu schätzen wussten. Göttingen erschien dann als die Stadt der idealen Mischungsverhältnisse.

Dass Göttingen nicht zweifelsfrei als Großstadt einzuordnen ist, ergibt sich schon aus dem verwaltungsrechtlichen Status, der lebensweltlich in ein Dilemma der Positionierung führt: Göttingen wird zwar administrativ als Großstadt eingeordnet, wenn auch am unteren Ende der Liste deutscher Großstädte (etwa an 66. Stelle von insgesamt 80 Großstädten in Deutschland ab 100.000 Einwohnenden). Von vielen Bewohnenden wird die Stadt aber kaum je als Großstadt adressiert. Vielmehr präsentierten unterschiedlichste Gesprächspartner*innen sie uns gegenüber im Studienprojekt als (mehr oder minder passende) „Mischung" – als eine Stadt, die alle Vorzüge von „Stadt" böte, ohne in „hektische Anonymität" und „Überangebot" zu führen, oder als eine Stadt, die „weder das eine noch das andere" sei, also weder Großstadt noch kleinstädtisch-ländlich.

Aus solchen diskursiven Strategien und Wertungen verschiedener Städte und Wohnorte wie Göttingen, Hamburg oder Berlin, die ich durch meinen Zuzug aus der norddeutschen Metropole ungewollt veranlasste, wurde ich auf das symbolische Kapital von Wohnorten aufmerksam und damit die Frage, welche Bedeutungen verschiedene Orte und Städte gesellschaftlich für wen und mit welcher Wirkung haben. Meine im Mittelstadtprojekt geschärfte Auslegung des Begriffs „residentielles Kapital" folgt insofern nicht jener des Geographen Peter Dierksmeier, sondern erweitert die Semantik des residentiellen Kapitals kulturwissenschaftlich in biographisch-subjektorientierter Hinsicht um den symbolischen Wert der Lokalität für die Anwohnenden. Eine zentrale Erkenntnis aus diesem Erfahrungsbündel war das Gewahrwerden eines in vielen Bereichen wirkmächtigen *Metrozentrismus*, einer Fokussierung auf die Großstadt als Referenzpunkt und eines Bildes von Urbanität und „Stadt", das von europäischen Großstädten des 19. Jahrhunderts geprägt wurde und bis heute eine normative Kraft birgt. Demgegenüber werden andere, nicht in dieses Vorstellungsbild passende Lebensumstände gesellschaftlich als abweichend und tendenziell defizitär positioniert, was Abwertung oder aber Überzeugungsrhetorik für die „gute/ideale Stadt" evoziert. Die latente Rechtfertigung oder Stadtschelte, die Göttingen in vielen Kontexten auslöste, ist Ausdruck des gesellschaftlich, wissenschaftlich wie politisch vorherrschenden Metrozentrismus.

Metrozentrismus ist ein offenkundiges Aufmerksamkeitsbias, das auch politische Strategien und mediale Diskurse durchzieht, wenn zum Beispiel selbstverständlich Metropolen und *megacities* als Trendsetter und Zukunftsindikatoren oder

geradezu gesellschaftliches „Labor" – eine ohnehin etablierte Zuschreibung an die Großstadt – genannt werden. Aber spiegeln derartige Lebenssituationen tatsächlich die gesellschaftliche Pluralität und Dynamik? Werden gesellschaftliche Neuerungen und Trends nur in Großstädten entschieden? Wohl kaum. Der Fokus auf ein bestimmtes (Groß)Stadtbild verengt die Pluralität gesellschaftlicher Lebensräume und -formen auf exemplarische Verhältnisse, an denen wir unsere Erwartungen und Wertungen ausrichten. Nicht alles scheint gleich „wichtig" und „wissenswert". Im Mittelstadtprojekt wurden wir wiederholt aufgefordert oder sahen uns veranlasst, zu begründen oder zu verteidigen, warum der (allzu) gewöhnlich scheinende Alltag einer deutschen und österreichischen Mittelstadt überhaupt das Forschungsinteresse der Wissenschaft weckt – fast so, als ob die Wahl nicht-metropolitaner Forschungsfelder weniger Prestige als extravagante Felder und hippe Phänomene in nahen oder fernen urbanen Zentren verleiht. Themenpolitiken und -dominanzen dieser Art sind Indikatoren für mitschwingende Blickregime, die gesellschaftliche Stimmungslagen spiegeln.

Wechsel der Blickregime manifestieren sich auch fachgeschichtlich: Das Fach der heutigen Empirischen Kulturwissenschaft folgte dem allgemeinen Trend des Metrozentrismus und schwenkte die Aufmerksamkeit vor allem seit den 1980er Jahren nahezu direkt vom Dorf auf die Großstadt. Erst in jüngster Zeit gibt es ein wachsendes Interesse an differenten Lebensräumen, wobei sich an einzelnen Standorten geradezu ein erneuter Richtungswechsel ins symbolische Gegenteil abzuzeichnen scheint: Verstärkt gilt die empirisch-kulturwissenschaftliche Aufmerksamkeit nunmehr ländlichen Räumen als marginalisierten und minorisierten Bereichen der Gesellschaft. Auf der Strecke bleiben erneut die vielen anderen, möglicherweise (ebenso) unspektakulär wirkenden Lebensverhältnisse.

Noch etwas wurde deutlich: Raumanalysen bedürfen der Kontextualisierung und Relationierung. Was „groß", „mittel" oder „klein" ist, folgt keiner objektiven Logik, sondern erklärt sich aus institutionellen (z.B. Verwaltung), materiell-symbolischen (Infrastruktur, Ökonomien etc.) und subjektiven Rahmungen (je nach Lebenssituation und Möglichkeiten, persönlichem Erfahrungs- und Erwartungshorizont).

Damit endet mein reflexiver Blick auf den erfahrungsgeleiteten Prozess von Themengebungen in einer empirisch auf- und nachspürenden Alltagskulturwissenschaft. Hermann Bausinger hat es vermocht, breitenwirksam auf die Relevanz und Brisanz der Kategorie Alltag hinzuweisen. Seiner Auslegung folgend halte ich *Alltag* für eine gegenständlich, epistemologisch wie forschungspraktisch zentrale Kategorie für eine breit angelegte Kulturwissenschaft. Durch die neuerlichen Veränderungen des gesellschaftlichen bzw. meines Alltagslebens erfuhr auch mein Interesse an Metrozentrismus und Mittelstadt eine Differenzierung und haben sich neue Themen in den Vordergrund gedrängt. Meine aktuellen Forschungsfelder richten sich der relational-praxeologischen Perspektive folgend weiterhin auf räumlich gebundene Lebensverhältnisse und ihre Bedeutung(en), berücksichtigen dabei aber zunehmend auch den ländlichen Raum in seiner Pluralität und seinen

Verknüpfungen. Heute beschäftigen mich (auch aufgrund meiner Lebenssituation) Bezüge zwischen „Stadt“ und „Land“ sowie Mischungen und Trends einer plurilokalen Lebensform in städtisch-ländlichen Verhältnissen. So frage ich nach Transformationen des ländlichen Raums sowie der Stadt-Land-Beziehungen und erkunde „rurbane“ Arrangements des Alltagslebens, die wechselnde Bezüge zwischen ländlichen und städtischen Lebensräumen und Kennzeichen erkennen lassen. So eröffnen sich Wege aus dichotomen Setzungen. Nicht zuletzt aufgrund der intensivierten Digitalisierung der Gesellschaft im Zuge der Corona-Pandemie und eines Wandels von Arbeitswelten durch Ausweitung von digitalen Arbeitsformaten und Home-Office pluralisieren sich die alltagsweltlichen Konstellationen. Langweilig wird es uns nicht: Die Themen gehen einer Alltagskulturwissenschaft nie aus.

Roberto Bolaño, *2666*

Dani Schrire

2666 was almost complete when Roberto Bolaño passed away. Published posthumously in 2004 (English translation 2008) it is the second "great novel" of the Chilean-Mexican-Spanish writer, after *The Savage Detectives* (2007 [1998]). *2666* offers one of the most horrifying accounts of the times, which we often call "the contemporary," but Bolaño does something more radical than that: rather than reading the present as a continuation of modern times he reads both with a conceptual repertoire that pushes the readers to meet them in new terms. In what follows, I begin with a very general overview, which is followed by a discussion of three aspects of the work, namely temporalities, spatialities, and infra-realistic passions. I then conclude with why I think reading (and re-reading) *2666* can inspire understanding of folklore and culture, making the passion of fiction relevant to research.

Bolaño's 900-page novel is divided into five parts that can also be read separately (initially, Bolaño meant for it to be published in five volumes). Violence plays a pivotal role in every one of them, particularly in the fourth one—"The Part about the Crimes," which is set in Santa Teresa, a city modelled on Ciudad Juárez, where hundreds of real femicides took place at the turn of the millennium (and sadly continue). These atrocities loom over "The Part about the Critics," "The Part about Amalfitano" and "The Part about Fate" presenting a very dark aspect of our globalized post-national era. Finally, "The Part about Archimboldi" presents stories of other forms of violence of the twentieth century. Further violent episodes are alluded to in the novel—from those committed against Afro-Americans to everyday deaths. Many commentators have discussed these forms of violence. Indeed, since

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Bolaño's oeuvre is related in a number of ways to the historical avant-garde and to his self-identification as a neo-avant-gardist, it should be viewed in the context of the use of violence in (neo)avant-garde works.

Despite the horror and violence, *2666* is also enjoyable, not to mention funny (even the fourth part includes some breaks); "The Part about the Critics" in particular delivers a hilarious account of international academic interaction in the decades that preceded the Covid-19 pandemic.

The temporalities of *2666* are of particular interest, given that the book tells us much about the contemporary neoliberal age, highlighting the work-conditions in the factories on the Mexican side of the border with the US and the stream of people who make their way there desperately in search of hope. The mystery of the femicides in Mexico reveals a very actual story, which seems at first to have no history—just as the bodies appear in the desert for no evident reason. Indeed, the fourth part—"The Part about the Crimes"—is read as a combination of a news reportage with pathological reports spanning the time between January 1993 and December 1997. Its factual tone renders it real and it is delivered as if in the present continuous. Needless to mention, the world described is not one that progresses anywhere: time does not move us forward or backward from an imagined "good old days." At no point do we get a real resolution as the bodies keep piling up, particularly when we close the book and turn to the newspaper.

The first three parts revolve around the same period of time as the femicides of Santa Teresa, each offering some background to the adult life of the key characters who end up in the Mexican border city: the four academic Critics in the first part (a French, Italian, Spanish and British); Óscar Amalfitano in the second part (himself a Chilean professor whose career was launched in Spain before settling in Santa Teresa); and in the third part, the life of Quincy Williams (nickname: Fate), an Afro-American reporter who went to Mexico to cover a boxing match. Biographical details of these characters bare the marks of a much larger context of a recent Euro-American history—the Black Panther movement, the Chilean coup etc. As we engage with the femicides in Mexico we do not know what "history" might become relevant in deciphering the atrocities.

Modernity and postmodernity have provided us with certain temporal imaginations that fail in *2666*, not because these temporal legacies are ignored. In fact, the epigram for the entire novel is taken from a poem by Baudelaire, one of the literary modernist heroes. As in his previous masterpiece, *The Savage Detectives*, avant garde works in literature and the arts are referenced throughout *2666*. Yet, in the awful Mexican present portrayed in *2666*, the very idea of an avant-garde becomes impossible. Bolaño rejects the very language of "progress" as multiple times coexist and modernity does not lead anywhere, even if the contemporary condition keeps relating to it.

The same boldness is also offered in the way space unfolds in *2666*. Bolaño disrupts the taken-for-granted connection between culture and space in radical ways: von Archimboldi, the name of the German writer who stands at the core of

the fifth part of the novel, alludes to the Italian painter with the German preposition "von," which typically indicates a seemingly stable origin of some sort (place or nobility affiliation). Bolaño's literary world is made despite space, cutting across linguistic barriers: the academic critics who follow the literary career of Archimboldi come from different places, meeting in all sorts of academic venues, from the Netherlands to Mexico.

This approach to space is coherent with Bolaño's work more broadly. In *Nazi Literature in the Americas* (1996) the entire Americas become the basis of a literary field, which can combine Ginzberg, Neruda, and European fascist works—real and made-up. North American literature in English is not separated from Latin American literature in Spanish, just as the politics of Chile's Pinochet were not separated from North America's policies; accordingly, the division of the literary world becomes futile. Nowhere is that more evident as in Bolaño's lecture "Literature and Exile" which he was invited to deliver in Vienna. The Austrian hosts probably considered Bolaño, a Chilean who was almost killed in the coup, and who during that time living near Barcelona as a writer in exile (as in the German paradigm of Exilliteratur). Bolaño disengaged from this altogether, asking rhetorically: "Can one feel nostalgia for the land where one nearly died?" (Bolaño 2011: 41–42). He ends his talk with a quote from a poem by Nicanor Parra to stress his point (43):

> Chile's four great poets
> are three:
> Alonso de Ercilla and Rubén Darío

Bolaño then discusses this poem concluding (45) that "Parra's poem teaches us … that probably our two best poets, Chile's best poets, were a Spaniard and a Nicaraguan who swung through these southern lands … neither of them with any intention of staying, neither with any intention of becoming a great Chilean poet, simply two people, two travelers …" Following in Parra's footsteps, the entire novel of *2666* leaves any sense of spatial stability behind—people are forced to leave or choose to travel for whatever reason: whether they are soldiers mobilized to the frontlines or academics on a way to a conference or a journalist who sets out to tell a story. Culture is made along these routes and their intersections.

With space and time flowing in different directions, perhaps the key to the novel is the way Bolaño engages culture as a totality where everything, even the slightest detail, can be relevant—nothing is too mundane to be written about. Although many "great writers" are mentioned in *2666* with reflections on what a "great work" is, the novel disengages from the idea that culture is something that should be searched for in those "lofty peaks." In this sense, it is an infra-realistic novel—which is not surprising given that Bolaño was one of the key members of the *infrarealistas*, a neo avant-garde Mexican poetic movement founded by Mario Santiago Papasquiaro in the mid-1970s. According to Rubén Medina "[f]or Bolaño, Santiago Papasquiaro, and their fellow *infrasoles*, the name Infrarealism stood for their efforts to represent the whole reality (an infra-world) that lies beyond the range

of hegemonic regimes of perception" (2017: 10). The Infrarealists were very much aware of being *neo* avant-gardists, relating in profound ways to ideas and poetic devices pioneered by the Surrealists in particular. Yet, "[u]nlike Surrealism which, as its etymology suggests, sought to surmount this reality (*sur* = over or above), Infrarealism delves beneath it (infra = under or below) to probe the primordial forces that generate our world" (Heinowitz 2017: 101).

This infra-realism is manifested in all parts of *2666* in a number of ways—from the use of metaphors and parallels, through the syntax of sentences that can last for half a page or include a single word to the very structure of the entire novel. I focus here on one such device—the art of digression, which in literature (as opposed to academic writing) is often used as a narrative strategy. The part about Archimboldi follows closely the biography of this fictional writer, but some figures he encounters become the subject of seemingly extensive digressions into other life-stories. For example, Archimboldi's whereabouts as a Wehrmacht soldier are told in detail. These include an extensive episode in which Archimboldi, still called by his original name, Hans Reiter, rested in Kostekino on the banks of the Dnieper, after a bullet pierced his throat in a battle nearby:

> One night, as he was having coffee at the brick house, Reiter heard a different account of the villagers' disappearance: they had neither been conscripted nor fled. The depopulation was the direct consequence of the passage through Kostekino of a detachment of the Einsatzgruppe C, which proceeded to physically eliminate all the Jews of the village. Since he couldn't speak he didn't ask any questions, but he spent the next day studying the house more closely (706).

Reiter's first encounter with the Jewish Holocaust is with a rumor that is presented as different from the official narrative. Reiter is speechless, but for other reasons than those that we attribute to the way a person is speechless when confronted with shocking news or events. While in this village, Archimboldi discovers accidently the hidden papers of a Jewish resident—Boris Abramovich Ansky. The next 30 pages are devoted to Ansky's life and writings. In fact, the digression into Ansky's story is spent mostly in telling of the latter's relationship with another writer—Ephraim Ivanov as we figuratively open one Babushka doll after another. It is still unclear to me whether Bolaño references the famous Jewish-Russian folklorist and writer Sh. Anksy (i.e. Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport; 1863–1920). Ivanov's story is tied to the Stalinist purges and the way literature is produced in face of the constant threat of death.

Later, we learn in detail of the atrocities of the Holocaust, again as a digression—a story told by Zeller (i.e. Leo Sammer), a Volkssturm soldier whom Archimboldi encountered coincidentally at a prisoner-of-war camp after the War ended. Zeller's stories are told in twenty pages including a detailed account of the "troubles" he went to in killing a few hundred Jews that in the chaos of the Eastern Front he was ordered to "eliminate." This episode is told in a factual manner that includes further

historical episodes, which typically occupy entire volumes, and are mentioned here in passing in Zeller's narrative of his "Jewish problem":

> Then I received a new order. I was to take charge of a group of Jews from Greece. I think they were from Greece. They might have been Hungarian or Croatian. But probably not, the Croats killed their own Jews. Maybe they were Serbian. Anyway, let's call them Greek. They were sending me a trainload of Greek Jews. Me! And I didn't have anywhere to put them … so what would I do with these Jews? … Then I phoned a friend, who put me in touch with a man who ran a camp for Jews near Chelmno. I explained my problem, asked what I could do with my Jews (752).

The sentence about Croatia is shocking—although a known historical fact (which is of course more complex than that), here it is told in passing as part of this digression from Zeller's story, which itself is a digression from Archimboldi's life-story. Zeller's detailed account confronts the reader with issues that for historians of the Holocaust may be of colossal dimensions: where were these Jews from? Zeller contemplates this question and eventually chooses for the sake of simplifying his narrative to "call them Greek."

All such tales of the Stalinist purges and Nazi crimes are presented *as if* they were a side-story to the biography of what is essentially "The Part About Archimboldi." Ultimately, we learn that the part about Archimboldi is never just about Archimboldi and what seems like digressions are in fact the very core of what happened to Archimboldi who encountered other people's stories that echo the real history—the real horror—of the twentieth century.

One of the most important attempts to study the everyday was carried out by avant-gardists who famously attempted to break the division between art and life. Bolaño's *2666* does this in ways that stay with the readers. Many detailed descriptions of the femicides and other horrors are read as reality to the point that the idea of *l'art pour l'art* crumbles. *2666* engages every aspect that make up the illusive notion of "culture" in a passionate way. The vast assemblage of events, people, names, habits, atrocities, jokes, places, quotations, and stories told in this novel can also be instructive of the kind of imagination and poetics that are so essential in engaging folklore and everyday life. Reading what is seemingly fiction can help trigger the same passion in research—which is to say that reading *2666* mattered to me in many ways, but one in particular. *2666* takes the idea of everyday culture into new realms: although folklorists expanded their interests from festive events and perhaps peasant life to encompass the everyday of workers and city dwellers, an important step wasn't fully fulfilled – the shift to the everyday entails also an examination of habits and practices of the so-called elites. By positioning everyday life of intellectuals on the same level as their literary artifacts and aligning their everyday anxieties and passions with their unearthly interests, Bolaño essentially 'folklorizes' such elites and thereby arrives at a fuller outlook on culture.

Reading matters, but not more than people; after all, everything, every encounter, matters.

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Liina Siib, “Urban Symphony in E-minor”

Elo-Hanna Seljamaa

“Urban Symphony in E-minor” is the umbrella title given by the artist Liina Siib (b. 1963) to her series on Estonian women living and working in Finland. Estonians constitute, by far, the largest group of foreign citizens in Finland. In addition to over 50,000 Estonian citizens living permanently in Finland, 20,000 or more commute between the two countries; many have become citizens of Finland. “Urban Symphony in E-minor” examines this transnational space by means of films, photographs, and installations (Siib 2021). The series is based on Siib’s interactions and interviews with Estonian women working in Finland, (participant) observations and (audio-)visual documentation carried out in 2016–2018 in Finland. This essentially ethnographic research is accompanied by an analysis of relevant public discourses and media representations in Estonia and Finland, as well as by readings of academic literature on sociology, economics, migration, mobility, and transnationalism involving these two countries and others.

The resulting artworks use the ideas and voices of Estonian women to identify gaps and prejudices in dominant discourses that distort the multiplicity of lived experiences and ambiguities of daily life. Perhaps most prominently, the series deals with the invisibility of Estonian women working in Finland and the silences surrounding them. Though the number of Estonian men working in Finland is only slightly larger than that of women, the stereotypical Estonian in Finland is a working man, especially a construction worker. An apt example of this skewed notion is the emic concept *kalevipoeg*, literally “the son of Kalev,” which is used by Estonians to designate fellow countrymen working in Finland. While the mythical giant Kalevipoeg, the protagonist of the Estonian national epic of the same title, walked

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to Finland to fetch planks, his contemporary namesakes have followed in his footsteps to make a living and provide for their families.

Siib overlooks the men to focus on women but without the intention of crafting an imaginary female counterpart of Kalevipoeg. "Urban Symphony" is not only a title but also a genre whose aim is to bring to the fore a diversity of experiences, motivations, aspirations, and observations. It is an urban composition by virtue of exploring Helsinki and its surroundings. Estonians are scattered throughout Finland and those living in rural areas would likely tell somewhat different stories. Siib carefully avoids generalizations.

Moreover, limiting the series to the Helsinki metropolitan area gives it shape by linking it intertextually to the historical documentary genre of the city symphony. Characteristic of the 1920s and hence of the silent film era, city symphonies are "minimalist in style, meticulous in detail" (Hutchinson 2017). Lacking characters and plots, they use juxtapositions to capture daily rhythms, flows and contradictions in buzzing urban centers, whether Berlin, Paris, or Manhattan. According to the film critic Pamela Hutchinson, "city symphonies aspire to a higher artistic status than the travelogue" and "are shaped as much by the edit as the treatment" (ibid.). While classic city symphonies come across as quirky surveys, portraits of cities by modern filmmakers tend to take a more personal approach and to focus on the individual (ibid.).

Siib gives the genre of the city symphony a unique twist. At the core of the series "Urban Symphony in E-minor" is a 44-minute film of the same title (Siib 2018). Created in collaboration with the film editor Henri Nõmm, it was first screened in 2018 in Helsinki at Sinne, a gallery specializing in Finnish-Swedish art. There is, no doubt, something symbolic about one minority group in Finland hosting a project about a marginalized group within another minority in the same country. The film combines excerpts from the artist's interviews with Estonian women working in Finland with shots of Helsinki. Female voices sharing personal opinions, experiences, concerns, joys, and hopes are accompanied by views of the Finnish capital by day and night, during different seasons, and images of landmarks, as well as random streets, shops, stations, and parks. Anonymous crowds come and go, commute, dine, and go about their everyday business, though every now and then the camera zooms in on an individual city dweller, on their feet, body, or hands. The individuality of voices and singularity of utterances lend the film intimacy, which is neutralized by the multiplicity of interviewees, topics, and views covered. Consequently, the approach is personal, as in the modern city symphonies discussed by Hutchinson, but without dwelling on any one individual. Siib met around 30 women and even though not all of their voices made it into the artwork, they all contributed to it in one way or another. The film begins and ends nowhere in particular: what is offered to viewers is a glimpse of a polyphonic flow of words and images.

The words preceded the images. Siib started by talking to women and sifted through the recorded and transcribed conversations before heading out with her

camera to translate the words into moving images. Watching the film, it is easy to forget that one is presented with snippets selected by the artist, the tip of the iceberg. Siib has the women narrate their working lives, daily routines, and accomplishments in Finland, reflect on the challenges of transnational family life and on their futures, and share their observations of the Finnish society and people. The women offer insightful comments and balanced views grounded in their daily lives and experiences both in Estonia and Finland. There is a doctor, a cleaner, a librarian, a diplomat, a taxi driver, a beautician, a construction painter, a teacher, and a trainer, among others, but many do not specify their occupations, and some have multiple jobs. One's position can be a source of identity that is closely entwined with one's lifestyle and aspirations, or it can "simply" be a gateway to a better life and a sense of security or even heightened self-esteem. The feeling that Finland cares for people in ways that Estonia does not is a recurrent theme, as is the tension between individual freedom and family ties.

Visualizing such abstract ideas is not an easy task. The artist holding the camera engages in flânerie. Alone, she zooms in on random couples, groups of friends, and large crowds. Social dancing, a favorite pastime of Finns, becomes a visual metaphor for juggling work with relationships and obligations back in Estonia. The camera also lingers on people sipping drinks on terraces, loitering, boating, or playing the hugely popular lottery. Often, however, the moving images illustrate literally what is being said and described. Comments about obesity and smoking are juxtaposed with shots of humongous candy shelves and smokers. If there is any irony or humor, it stems from a visual amplification of the interviewees' verbal accounts. The artist takes her interlocutors seriously, letting them guide her gaze and camera.

An academically trained ethnographer, I am intrigued by the balancing act that Siib performs in the film between her artistic aims and ethical issues that, as I am accustomed to think, accompany ethnographic ventures of any kind. The relationship between aesthetics and ethics is at the heart of much of the discussion about art and anthropology. Artists using ethnographic methods have been criticized for ransacking the anthropological toolkit for ideas and approaches that fit their creative visions, while turning a blind eye to accountability and their collaborators' agency.

While I am sensitive to sacrifices "of human beings to an artistic vision" (Grimshaw and Ravetz 2015: 427), I doubt that it is possible to create art while eliminating artistic intent and authority. "Ethnographically inflected artistic work" (427) is still artistic. It is not exempt from ethical considerations, nor is it always corrupt. There need not to be a tension between ethics and aesthetics. Moreover, I think that one should be careful not to underestimate the people participating in artists' ethnographic projects: the women interviewed by Siib knew that they were talking to an artist and contributing to an artwork.

Like Anna Grimshaw and Amanda Ravetz, who have for many years explored the gray area between art and anthropology, I have come to conceive of art and anthropology as "different ways of engaging the world" (432). Though both strive

to create new knowledge, they interpret and practice the ethnographic differently, granting differential values to aesthetics, ethics and matters of form (431). Initially, Siib's interviews were merely meant to provide the impetus for visual work, but they emerged as its backbone in the process of creation. Despite overlaps in fieldwork methods, the working process of an artist differs from that of a scholar, and it is due to these differences that I find contemporary art good to think with about scholarly practices.

The core film of the "Urban Symphony in E-minor" series intertwines aesthetics and ethics in a manner that further underlines and examines the invisibility of Estonian women in Finland. Watching the film, one hears the voices of Siib's collaborators but does not get to see them, at least not knowingly. They might well make an appearance in the film but are indistinguishable from the many female city dwellers captured by the artist's camera. While this is a tactic that enables the artist to provide her interviewees with anonymity, it also alludes to the tendency to brush aside women working in Finland and the resulting biased representation of this topic in Estonia. Even more significantly, the visual absence of the interviewees from the film conveys the position or the kind of existence that Estonian women in the Helsinki metropolitan area might aspire to and fear, sometimes simultaneously. To be invisible is to be ordinary, to blend in and pass as Finnish.

Daria Krivonos in her ethnographic study of Russian-speaking migrants in Helsinki discusses passing as a tool for both "disciplining bodies" and "thinking about people's efforts to disidentify and distance themselves from the subject positions they occupy" (Krivonos 2020: 390). She found that Russian-speaking migrants, including those coming from Estonia, felt a need to make their Russianness less visible, to pass as *not* Russian. According to Krivonos, this is because of the racialized hierarchy within Europe between fully-fledged, normative Westernness and incomplete Eastern Europeanness. Krivonos and many other scholars exploring race in the Eastern-European context argue that the idea of Eastern Europe, like that of the Orient, is a product of the West and constitutive thereof. The Otherness of Eastern Europeans, however, is not as radical as that of non-white non-European subjects; rather, they could be said to occupy the position of "contiguous Others" (388). Migrants' tactics of passing "suggest that even bodies that appear phenotypically white do not live up to the standards of hegemonic whiteness and Europeanness, and that these migrants feel they must invest in their bodies to approximate the white Western body if they want to achieve social advancement after migration" (389). Efforts to pass are individual, while passing itself is not an individual act or decision, "but contingent on prior histories and the circulation of racialized and gendered notions" (390).

According to Krivonos, the "sites of racial differentiation" where one attempts to pass—and might be "caught out"—include dress, surname, accent, language, and audibility, all of which feature in Siib's urban symphony. The interviewees seem to be aware that these are the things that matter and carry performative weight. A few women describe their experiences of being discriminated against based on their

Estonian origin. Others comment on their inability to avoid overdressing or, on the contrary, lament their lapsed sense of style manifested in wearing sneakers rather than pretty shoes. Being beautifully groomed, and having one’s hair or nails done become means of maintaining Estonianness, which is defined in opposition to what they see as Finnish women’s excessive casualness. Fitness clubs and beauty parlors run by Estonian female entrepreneurs serve as community centers of sorts, bringing together mothers and daughters to network in Estonian and to shape their bodies as well as their minds. The values and ideas of self-respect and self-care that these venues cultivate are as gendered as they are ethnicized.

One can sense a hint of disapproval in the voice of those interviewees who describe families where children no longer or hardly speak Estonian. Though Estonian and Finnish are related and to a degree mutually intelligible, learning Finnish requires some effort, as does maintaining one’s Estonian language while living abroad. The interviewees speak Estonian in the film, some with a slight Finnish accent. The fact that nobody gets to evaluate their Finnish is significant. Invisibility calls for remaining silent when adjusting one’s accent is not an option (cf. Krivonos 2020: 397). Becoming indistinguishable is a temporary achievement and tends to come with a price.

“Urban Symphony in E-minor” captures the multiple positions and roles that Estonian women in Finland straddle. It does so through its aesthetics and form. Juxtaposing images and words, Liina Siib explores *and* plays an (in)visibility game that resembles her collaborators’ daily negotiations of where they belong in the Finnish-Estonian transnational space. There is something enviable about the artist’s freedom, and the relationship between her visual and my own mostly verbal ways of producing knowledge continues to intrigue me.

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James Clifford, *On the Edges of Anthropology*

Carol Silverman

An interview from James Clifford's slim volume *On the Edges of Anthropology* (2003) helped me to unpack debates about tradition and authenticity, issues that have impacted my work with Roma cultural mobilization and activism. Clifford is both an insider and outsider to the fields of Anthropology and Folklore; perhaps this is one reason he can shift easily among viewpoints. His title is Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Humanities and the History of Consciousness Department, University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), where he founded the Center for Cultural Studies. His degree was in European Intellectual and Social History from Harvard (1977) and he was heavily influenced at UCSC by Hayden White, Donna Haraway, Teresa de Lauretis, and Angela Davis. His early work focused on the intellectual history of anthropology, "with an emphasis on Western notions of culture, art, and the exotic as these were related to changing colonial and postcolonial situations," as it says in his official USCS "career narrative." He continued to observe anthropologists at work in terms of how they analyze and justify culture and artistic production; he is interested in the role of western scholars in collecting, exhibiting and translating objects and ideas. I appreciate Clifford's ability to both problematize and champion ethnographic perspectives while insisting on sensitive historical analysis. He deftly moves between the fields of literary studies, history and cultural anthropology. His more recent work on indigenous cultural claims underlines the messy domain of global forces surrounding identity politics.

Here I want to I highlight an interview with Clifford from 2000 done by Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, a Portuguese Comparative Literature Professor, where

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Clifford delves into the notion of non-essentialist concepts of culture and analyzes the notion of bricolage. The interview serves as a prologue to Clifford's 2004 article "Looking Several Ways: Anthropology and Native Heritage in Alaska," a case study of how Native Alaskans are deconstructing a narrow concept of tradition/heritage to open it up for creative revitalization. Native heritage projects, which involve refashioning museums and archives, are useful to compare to current Romani culture projects that involve similar multi-media documentation, such as RomArchive. In the Balkan music section of this international digital archive, we strive to document traditional Romani music but not to fossilize its genres. In fact, Roma have often been musical innovators. Balkan Romani music, moreover, cannot be easily confined to categories such as traditional vs. popular or rural vs. urban. It elides narrow classifications and needs to be interpreted in context, highlighting the professional role of Roma who serve patrons of various ethnicities.

The concept of essentialism is central to debates about tradition. Clifford seeks to recoup a workable use of the culture concept that is non-static, non-essentialist but can still be used for the mobilization of identity. He moves away from the notion of the "invention of tradition" to the more Neo-Marxian notion of "articulation," taken from British Cultural Studies and the work of Stuart Hall and Antonio Gramsci. "Articulation is the political connecting and disconnecting, the hooking and unhooking of elements—the sense that any socio-cultural ensemble that presents itself to us as a whole is actually a set of historical connections and disconnections. A set of elements have been combined to make a cultural body … through actively sustained antagonisms. (Clifford 2003: 45). Articulation underlines the making and remaking of culture in its historical and political context.

In examining the emergence of Romani anthems, flags, archives, and museums, and historical symbols such as the Holocaust, we see that although Roma have been excluded from the dominant tropes of national folklore and cultural heritage, they have constructed their own symbols of heritage as part of a strategizing process in European politics. The concept of heritage/tradition can be pried from its narrow historical moorings to understand these symbols of the Romani rights movement as historically placed responses to marginality. At the same time, an expanded notion of heritage helps us widen bounded notions of national culture to embrace multicultural and hybrid forms.

The site of intersection between Romani communities and institutions (such as states, markets, and museums) provides a fruitful context to examine cultural production in response to structural constraints. My work shows how Balkan Romani musicians have negotiated the interface between community roles and world music markets, including non-Romani collaborators, managers, and organizers. I also examine my own role as a non-Romani music producer as I simultaneously navigate between these domains. I also try to fight discrimination while acknowledging the "strategic essentialism" and self-stereotyping that many musicians need to engage.

An expanded notion of culture that is tied to the past but not constrained by it can help us widen bounded notions to embrace new performative forms. According to Clifford, "tradition is not a wholesale return to past ways, but a practical selection and critical reweaving of roots" whereby "some essentialisms are embraced while others are rejected" (2004: 157). Clifford notes that indigenous leaders are simultaneously loosening and reclaiming the notion of culture (2004: 156). Dirlik writes similarly about Native Americans: "Contrary to critics … who see in every affirmation of cultural identity an ahistorical cultural essentialism, indigenous voices are quite open to change; what they insist on is not cultural purity or persistence, but the preservation of a particular historical trajectory of their own" (1997: 223).

Rejecting their emplacement in the past, Native leaders assert their legitimacy to occupy public places through global displays of media, art, literature, and ritual. Similarly, Roma have established cultural centres, designed exhibits and educational centres, and produced archives. As Clifford writes, these are zones of contact "whereby authenticity thus becomes a process—the open-ended work of preservation and transformation. Living traditions must be selectively pure: mixing, matching, remembering, forgetting, sustaining, transforming their senses of communal continuity" (2004: 156).

Clifford claims that "what is at stake is the power to define tradition and authenticity, to determine the relationships through which … identity is negotiated in a changing world" (157). Drawing on Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Concsiousness* (1993), Clifford emphasizes that the challenge is to reject both a pro- and anti-essentialist position and to embrace an 'anti-anti-essentialist' position:

> The two negatives, do not, of course, add up to a positive, and so the anti-anti-essentialist position is not simply a return to essentialism. It recognizes that a rigorously anti-essentialist attitude, with respect to things like identity, culture, tradition, [and] gender … is not really a position one can sustain in a consistent way … Certainly one can't sustain a social movement or a community without certain apparently stable criteria for distinguishing us from them. These may be … articulated in connections and disconnections, but as they are expressed and become meaningful to people, they establish accepted truths. Certain key symbols come to define the we against the they; certain core elements … come to be separated out, venerated, fetishized, defended. This is the normal process, the politics, by which groups form themselves into identities … (Clifford 2003: 62)

Hall points out that identity politics arise precisely around issues of representation:

> Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past … actually identities are about … using the resources of history, language, and culture in the process of becoming … [N]ot "who we are" or "where we came from" so much as who we might become, how we have been represented, and how

> that bears on how we represent ourselves. Identities are, therefore constituted within, not without representation. (1996: 4)

Further, debates about representation are embedded in structures of inequality. Similarly, Huub van Baar (2011) argues that manifestations of Roma self-articulation are not expressions of problematic essentialisms but rather are related to interrogations of how essentialized renderings of Roma (usually crafted by non-Roma) have affected them throughout history. With new projects, Roma continue to create new ways of articulating cultural identity that are not stuck in the past, but reference the past in relationship to the future. Hall's concept of identity similarly rejects an unchanging traditional core; he questions a "true self … which a people with a shared history … hold in common"; rather, identities are "never unified, and … increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but multiply constructed across … intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions" (1996: 3–4). For Roma, identity has always been construed in relation to hegemonic powers such as patrons of the arts, states, markets, officials, scholars and funders.

The term tradition can then be reclaimed, for it "is not a wholesale return to past ways, but a practical selection and critical reweaving of roots" whereby "some essentialisms are embraced while others are rejected" (Clifford 2004: 157). Culture should not be read as "endless reiteration but as 'the changing same,' not the so-called return to roots but a coming-to-terms-with our routes" (Hall 1996: 4). Both Hall and Clifford reference Gilroy's (1993: 101) useful formulation of tradition as the "changing same" in reference to the African American diaspora. Similarly, Romani cultural identity projects can be fruitfully analyzed in their historical contexts, paying special attention to inequalities and hierarchies. Thus, the static character of the concepts of tradition/heritage can be reframed to understand how Roma are performatively crafting their identities.

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John Caldwell et al., "The Social Context of AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa"

Laura Stark

In the early 2010s I struggled with the question of *why* (hetero)sexuality in my Tanzanian field site (2010–2021) struck me as being so very different from the middle-class (hetero)sexualities I grew up with in small-town California and later encountered in Finland. The presently discussed article, henceforth "The Caldwell paper," was the first (and last) that echoed my intense intellectual curiosity on this topic. Roundly condemned by Africanist anthropologists, sociologists, and gender scholars for being ahistorical, deterministic, homogenizing, ethnocentric, and colonizing (see, e.g., Nyanzi et al. 2008), it became a shorthand reference for everything that a serious ethnographically-oriented scholar in Africa should never do.

I argue that critiques against the Caldwell paper effectively shut down intellectual curiosity about the nature of sexual *difference* between societies on the African subcontinent and societies with Eurasian roots. Although research into African sexualities continued, it remained thereafter localized and particularistic, eschewing questions of origins and cross-continental differences. Differences in sexual practices, it is true, have been used in the service of sexist, racist, and imperialist agendas, interpreted in the global North as a sign of Africa's "degeneration" from an ideal norm. Yet without explicit attention to difference, Eurocentric perspectives remain the default approach to sexuality in Africa even though they have proven to be of little value in understanding the diverse richness of attitudes and behaviors on the sub-continent.

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My intention here is not to critique other critiques, but to give a cautionary example of how criticism of any flawed-but-pathbreaking work can quickly shut down avenues of inquiry into sensitive subjects, as reviewers strive to stay on the "safe side" of a subject (as I did for roughly a decade) and therefore willfully ignore evidence in their data. In my research as in the Caldwell paper, evidence has been persuasive in viewing *difference* as an integral part of a (ideally theory-generating) system.

The Caldwell paper's sources consist of over 120 ethnographically-oriented studies of sexuality in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as their own field research from 1960s' and 1970s' urban Nigeria. In the year the paper was published, the grievous extent of the AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa was just beginning to be understood. The authors sought to understand the reasons behind the AIDS crisis, and their main theorem was that high HIV rates could be linked to a single, unitary pan-African sexuality. They argued for the importance of sexual networks in HIV infections (a view shared by later scholars), and for the existence of a pan-African sexual system in which virginity, abstinence, conjugal ties, and "controlling the morals and mobility of women" (Caldwell et al.: 222) were less desirable than in the so-called Eurasian system. The authors' stated purpose in writing the paper was to demonstrate the "aggression" and misguidedness of anti-HIV campaigns in the region and to show "that the sub-Saharan African population is not a morally backsliding Eurasian population that can be returned by exhortation and educational campaigns to a pattern of sex occurring predominantly within marriage" (224–225). Despite accusations of ethnocentricity, the Caldwell paper in fact criticized previous research on sexual behavior in sub-Saharan Africa for departing from the historical peculiarities of European and Asian sexuality and for focusing "too much on the African system as the one that has to be explained" (191). The paper's authors made the key point there is no such thing as a "neutral" vantage point for studying human sexual behavior.

In my research on heterosexual residents from 35 different ethnic groups living in two urban, low-income neighborhoods of Tanzania (where many persons still suffer and die from AIDS), I have been struck by the open transactionality of men's giving money in return for physical intimacy with women. While the transactional nature of intimacy is by no means easy to navigate for the partners involved, in itself, transactionality was not seen as cause for shame or disapproval. There is a rich literature on transactional sex in sub-Saharan Africa, but the Caldwell paper is one of the very few to note that the "transactional element is widely present within marriage as well" (204). They also suggest that transactional intimacy and "parallel relationships" such as the long-term relationships between married men and 'outside' women known in many parts of Africa (215) can be seen as the less formalized continuation of the older practice of polygyny. In all, my interview data featured roughly 20 aspects that were also prominent in the Caldwell paper, including widespread transactionality; the importance of sexual networking; communities' tolerance of girls' premarital sexual freedom (even among Muslims);

sex as a legitimate source of self-esteem and pleasure for both men and women; and impotence experienced by men as a terrible stigma.

These similarities prompted me to ask: Are there differences between sub-Saharan Africa and mainstream Western societies in the ways that physical intimacy, emotion, social organization, and resources are organized? Why is money in sub-Saharan Africa *not* seen as the cold, rational instrument of exchange in intimacy that it is in Europe and North America, but instead as an expression of caring and affection, as the best gift that a lover can give? Lastly, how is this entanglement between love and money in sub-Saharan Africa linked to social and biological reproduction?

The Caldwell paper suggests where to look for answers to these questions by giving an environmental-historical explanation for how sexual behavior and attitudes are linked to patterns of social organization they call a "system." In this explanation, the Caldwell paper draws on anthropologist Jack Goody's work regarding cultural aspects of production and reproduction in Eurasia, which Goody defined as extending from the Mediterranean to South Asia, with China added (191). The authors drew on their sources to build their own contrasting model of production and reproduction in sub-Saharan Africa. The overall contours of their model, especially the value placed on *people as wealth* on the African subcontinent rather than *land as wealth* (as has historically been in Eurasia), resonate with the works of both earlier and later anthropologists of Africa who have emphasized the importance of having "wealth in people" and being attached to others in networks of economic dependence.

The authors' interpretation of Goody's model goes like this: In Eurasia, the good soils for agriculture and the development of the plow drawn by draft animals enabled a significant surplus of food. The land that produced this surplus was thus strategically desirable, and property and inheritance laws developed to guarantee access to it (191). Families who maintained and defended these plots of land sought to preserve and consolidate land holdings by preventing any claims of inheritance by children not born into same-class marriages (191–192). This was done by controlling female sexuality to prevent births out of wedlock: "Female sexual purity was maintained by degrees of seclusion and by males forgoing potentially useful female assistance in many areas [of life] in order to maintain it (192)."

In Africa, by contrast, the soils were mostly poor. "Plows were of little value, and, over great areas, the tsetse fly prohibited the use of draft animals" (192). Productivity in agriculture, therefore, could not be achieved through control over *land* but instead through greater labour input, which necessitated control over people. Lineages therefore welcomed additional children, "even those of uncertain paternity" (200). The emphasis on lineage rather than on the conjugal bond as a means of consolidating resources and bolstering family prestige meant that more importance was placed on female fertility than on virginity at marriage, or even wives' fidelity inside marriage. By offering one historical explanation for the importance of "wealth in people" in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caldwell paper laid the

foundations for a closer examination of *what is being transacted* in acts of sexual intimacy beyond money and pleasure.

The Caldwell paper admittedly suffers from a number of lacunae. Phrases like "African society" (193, 199) or sub-Saharan Africa as "an alternative civilization" (222) are gross overgeneralizations that were deservedly rebuffed by critics. The paper engages in an abundance of speculation and presents evidence that contradicts its main claims. Researchers having a closer ethnographic acquaintance with the diversity of the largest subcontinent on earth were right in pointing out that the article's claim of a "distinct and *internally coherent* African system embracing sexuality, marriage and much else …" (187, emphasis mine) could never hold much water.

The study was also critiqued for its methodological flaws. Le Blanc, Meintel and Piché (1991) rightly point out that the authors did not explain the criteria by which they selected their source data, and that they excluded from their analysis some studies that would have provided evidence for a broader variety of sexual patterns in sub-Saharan Africa.

Not all critics engaged in an equally close reading of the paper, however. Ignored were the numerous qualifiers in the Caldwell paper and the authors' admission that much of their argumentation was "hypothesized" given the scarcity of culturally sensitive data in the late 1980s. Critics accused the authors of gender bias, of neglecting a female perspective and focusing primarily on women's role in sexual networking, even when the authors had explained that the data on women's experiences was sparse. The authors were critiqued for using words like "permissive," "immoral," and "promiscuous" (Ahlberg 1994; Arnfred 2004) to describe sexual relations in Africa when in fact they had only used these words when quoting or referring to previous researchers with whom they disagreed.

Interestingly, most critics completely bypassed the authors' use of Goody's Eurasian model. Instead, they objected to the fact that Caldwell paper—already over-long at 49 pages—did not include the aspects of sexuality in which *they* were most interested or that were most prominent in *their* fieldwork data: for example how sexuality was historically influenced by indigenous and colonial religions or the prominence of modesty rules and kinship taboos regarding sex and marriage, points intended to counter the Caldwell paper's supposed assertions of African sexual "permissiveness" (Ahlberg 1994; Heald 1995).

In my data, sexual and material pleasures are intertwined, especially for women. For them, sex was not—as it has never been—just about libidinal desires. Sex was a way to eat and pay rent. It may matter to people in Eurocentric societies, but not necessarily to urban Tanzanians whether sexual desires "ultimately" derive from desire for genital-related pleasures or from the desire for food for self and children, or for the clothes that grant social dignity.

Persons of both genders also looked for something from sexual intimacy not easily articulated in interviews: they wanted their partner to help them manage their social reputations as respectable and useful members of society and to achieve socially normal personhood. I was told that for men, it was vital to be able to

penetrate, provide for, and pleasure a woman sexually in order to be considered a "real man" and receive social respect. A neighborhood resident who was impotent knew that his children were fathered by a neighbor but kept silent because keeping up the appearance of his own fatherhood was more important than reacting to his wife's infidelity. For young women, having a male intimate partner provide for her (in or out of wedlock) was seen as an important way to be "independent," to gain the respect of neighbors, and to *not* be financially dependent on relatives. Moreover, even if marriage was often unattainable due to male unemployment, giving birth to a child allowed young women to build their own uterine families—families fed through the mother's sex work.

Rather than simply for reproduction or pleasure, in Tanzania sexual relations can be analyzed as a social "glue" in exchange bargains in which men and women seek to prove that they are able-bodied, "normal," and "functioning." Sex becomes the mechanism—simultaneously symbolic and physical—by which such bargains are actualized and through which they are understood. Since men generally have more access than women to the resources needed to survive, money channeled from men to women enables this "glue" to maintain its hold. In neoliberal Tanzania, *money and sexual relations together* thus become a way of linking people in networks to create wealth in people. In this context, sexual education and anti-HIV campaigns based on Western ideologies have had little impact, just as the Caldwell paper predicted.

Researchers of what is called sexuality in any society need to understand how all its elements play out in relation to each other and how the differences across regional areas arose globally. The Caldwell paper authors (188–189) showed the possibility of broadly imagining how a regional *system* implies that different elements *co-create* each other. In the end, researchers of African sexuality could have used the Caldwell paper's idea of a system as a starting point for exploration, disagreeing with some elements and proposing caveats about the extent to which the system's features were culturally shared across and within communities on the African subcontinent. Instead, they rejected it outright for reasons that, upon closer reading, do not seem entirely defensible.

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Thomas Rees, „Loretta – von Keuschheit und Begehren“

Markus Tauschek

Wer um Freiburg herum gerne wandert, kennt sie, die Holzstatuen des in der Nähe von Freiburg lebenden Bildhauers Thomas Rees (geb. 1959). Schon die Titel seiner meist aus ganzen Baumstämmen mit der Kettensäge herausgeholten Arbeiten verraten ihr Programm: In der Figur „Sündenfall“ (2021) umklammert eine nackte Frau eine Teufelsfigur; „Erderwärmung und der Biosphärenteufel“ (2019) zeigt einen Teufel, der mit dem linken Fuß einen Blasebalg betätigt, der wiederum ein Feuer unter der Erdkugel anfacht; und „Coronus“ (2020) soll einen Pestarzt darstellen mit Schutzmantel und sogenannter Pestmaske. Die Bildsprache der Werke von Rees scheint auf den ersten Blick jeder Art von Mehrdeutigkeit eine Absage zu erteilen. Auf seiner Homepage bietet der Bildhauer Interpretationen an, die sich vielfach durchaus kritisch mit der Gegenwart (z.B. mit Umweltzerstörung und Vermüllung), insbesondere aber mit Anklängen an traditionelle Erzählstoffe mit dem Mystischen und Geheimnisvollen auseinandersetzen. Rees zählt ohne jeden Zweifel zu den vielen regionalen Künstlern, die lokale Spezifika aufgreifen und die es zu einer gewissen räumlich begrenzten Berühmtheit schaffen. Man muss kein Bourdieu-Experte sein, um zu erkennen, dass Rees' Werke polarisieren: Für die einen sind sie faszinierend, schön und eben Kunst, weil sie etwa lokale Sagen oder historische wie aktuelle Ereignisse aufgreifen und touristische Stereotype des Schwarzwalds bedienen. Für die anderen manifestiert sich in ihnen schlechter Geschmack, sind sie Kitsch und damit eben gerade keine Kunst, weil sie die gegenwärtigen Diskurse und Richtungen moderner Bildhauerei ignorierten.

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Geradezu in der Nachbarschaft des Freiburger Instituts für Kulturanthropologie und Europäische Ethnologie entfaltete sich ab Juni 2021 ein Konflikt, ein handfester Skandal oder – je nach Perspektive – auch eine lokale Provinzposse. Um diese soll es im Folgenden gehen. Was war vorgefallen?

Schon seit Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts steht im Freiburger Stadtteil Wiehre das Lorettobad, ältestes Freibad der Stadt und ältestes Familienfreibad in Deutschland. Seit 1886 besitzt dieses ein eigens abgegrenztes „Damenbad", das einzige seiner Art in Deutschland. Immer wieder gab es Diskussionen um das Bad. 1980 etwa klagte ein Jurastudent erfolglos gegen die räumliche Trennung, das Bad verstoße gegen das Gleichheitsgesetz des Grundgesetzes. Und im Juli 2018 sorgte das Lorettobad überregional für Schlagzeilen, weil vermehrt muslimische Frauen aus dem Elsass nach der Verschärfung der Badeordnung des Gartenbads Eglisee im Osten Basels das Freiburger Bad für sich entdeckten. „Jetzt nervt sich Freiburg über Musliminnen aus dem Elsass", titelte die Schweizer *TagesWoche* (Duong 2018); „Aufruhr in einem Freiburger Frauenbad. Erobert von Musliminnen", skandalisierte bereits 2017 die *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, die gar von einem „Kulturkampf" sprach (Keck 2017). In Basel wurde das ‚Problem' durch eine Verschärfung der Badeordnung ‚gelöst'; in Freiburg ließ man sich vom Präsidialdepartement Basel-Stadt beraten. Die Freiburger Damenbad-Ordnung schien empfindlich gestört – mit Norbert Elias könnte man argumentieren, dass sich hier ein klassischer Konflikt zwischen Etablierten und Außenseiter*innen manifestierte: Tobende Kinder störten aus Sicht der alteingesessenen Badenden die Ruhe; der Burkini entspräche nicht der Kleiderordnung im Bad; die Polizei musste vermehrt anrücken, es kam zu aktenkundig gewordenen Beleidigungen und gegenseitigen Anschuldigungen. Dabei wurde von offizieller Seite mehrfach betont, man sei nicht ausländerfeindlich, die Ordnung müsse aber eingehalten werden. Das Bad selbst reagierte damit, dass auch männliche Bademeister im Lorettobad fortan für Ordnung sorgen sollten; dagegen richtete sich eine Petition, die mit 432 Unterschriften hingegen am notwendigen Quorum scheiterte. Die Anwesenheit männlicher Bademeister wiederum hielt viele muslimische Frauen vom Besuch des Bads fortan ab. Die Diskussionen ebbten schnell wieder ab, ohne dass diese aus meiner Sicht enorm diskriminierende und im Kern antimuslimische Maßnahme noch weiter kritisch diskutiert worden wäre.

Allein bis hierher ließen sich schon die Potenziale kulturwissenschaftlicher Analyse zeigen: Die Kulturalisierung von Differenz etwa, die Auseinandersetzung um das wahrgenommene, mit der historisierenden Patina versehene und damit als kulturell verstandene Eigentum der Etablierten, die diskursive Aushandlung der Differenzkategorie Gender, die hier mit anderen Differenzkategorien wie etwa der Klasse oder dem sozialen Milieu verwoben wurde, oder schließlich auch das Ringen um das politisch korrekte Sprechen über diesen Vorgang. Trotz des Versuchs einer nüchternen kulturanthropologischen Analyse macht mich dieser Vorgang geradezu fassungslos, denn er zeigt, wie wirkmächtig antimuslimische Reflexe sind; und dies in einer Stadt, die sich selbst das Imaginaire einer liberalen und weltoffenen Großstadt gibt. Warum etwa wurde nicht einfach die Zahl der Badenden

reglementiert? Warum fand keine weitere kritische Diskussion statt, die sich auch mit den berechtigten Bedürfnissen muslimischer Frauen befasste?



Abb. 1: Statue von Loretta im Freiburger Lorettobad, photographiert vom Künstler. Abdruck mit freundlicher Genehmigung.

Damit war das Lorettobad aber noch lange nicht aus den Schlagzeilen, denn im Juni 2021 wurde eine Holzfigur mit dem sprechenden Titel „Loretta – von Keuschheit und Begehren“ von Thomas Rees eingeweiht. Sie zeigt eine nackte Frau mit wallendem Haar auf den Schultern des Hirtengotts Pan. Der Verein der Freunde des Lorettobads hatte die Figur erworben aus Spenden sowie aus Einnahmen von Veranstaltungen. Die schnellste Reaktion erfolgte in Freiburgs Szenemagazin *fudder*. In einem als „Meinung“ markierten Beitrag vom 16. Juni 2021 macht die Autorin aus ihrem Ärger keinen Hehl: „Ausgerechnet in nächster Nähe zu Deutschlands einzigem Damenbad steht nun eine Skulptur, die Vergewaltigung verherrlicht und eine Frauenfigur sexualisiert. 1000 Zeichen Hass“ (Hardt 2021). Die vergleichsweise überschaubare Anzahl an Kommentaren – 12 an der Zahl – unter dem auf der Homepage von *fudder* veröffentlichten Beitrag ließ noch nicht erahnen, wie groß der Aufschrei in den kommenden Tagen noch sein sollte. Die Kommentare aber verdichten bereits die in der Folge vielfach diskutierten Argumente. Sie zeigen auch, wie vielschichtig das Werk gelesen wurde und welche diskursiven Formationen dabei strategisch artikuliert wurden.

Da ist zunächst einmal die Frage danach, ob die Statue nun Kunst sei oder nicht. Unter dem Pseudonym „SilberWolf“ argumentiert ein Kommentar beispielsweise mit künstlerischer Freiheit und Zensur: „wenn das Ding nun eine Kopie oder ein Abguss einer Skulptur aus dem antiken Griechenland oder Rom wäre, würde keiner etwas sagen. Aber da es nun neu ist, wird ein Skandal draus gemacht. Wie sieht es denn da aus mit künstlerischer Freiheit und Zensur? Haben wir keine anderen Probleme? Staatszensur und Gängelung z.B.?“ Insbesondere die letzte Frage verweist auf ein vielfach artikuliertes Argument in der Debatte um gendergerechte Sprache. Sie hierarchisiert gesellschaftliche Herausforderungen und disqualifiziert damit gleichzeitig die berechtigten Interventionen zur Herstellung einer in allen gesellschaftlichen Sphären umzusetzenden Gleichstellung. Der erste Teil des Arguments wiederum adressiert keineswegs nur ein Geschmacksproblem, da etwa historische Darstellungen nackter Frauen auch Gegenstand der Kontroverse waren.

Der zweite Kommentator mit dem Pseudonym „Reingeschmeckter“ knüpft hier direkt an, indem er für eine differenzierte Betrachtung plädiert: Die Figur entspräche zwar nicht seinem Geschmack, gleichzeitig sei dem Kunstwerk aber das Anstoßen einer Debatte gelungen. Die Anspielungen auf Ovid, die Rees dezidiert intendierte, solle man gleich der Grimmschen Märchen nicht als bare Münze nehmen, die dargestellte Geschichte müsse man „nicht zwingend nur durch die feministische Brille sehen“.

Unter dem Pseudonym „IchHalt“ reagiert der folgende Kommentar: „Eine solche Skulptur vor dem Frauenbad erweckt den Eindruck, als sei das ein Bordell. Das Konzept des Bades ist explizit, dass Frauen dort nicht sexualisiert, objektifiziert und belästigt werden. Und diese Skulptur tut genau das.“ Hier verweist der Kommentar neben „der Sache mit den männlichen Bademeistern“ dann auch auf eigene Erfahrungen in gemischten Schwimmbädern, in denen sexistisches

Verhalten an der Tagesordnung und eine „Qual“ sei. Und weiter kritisiert die Autorin: „Exklusive Frauenräume, wie dieses Schwimmbad, sind dafür da, die Frauen vor Gewalt von Männern zu schützen. Und dann stellt man eine Statue davor, die genau diese Thematik symbolisiert ... Wenn man es ganz gut meint, kann man das als Mahnmal betrachten – aber ich bezweifle, dass die meisten Menschen das so interpretieren ... Die sehen eine nackte, sexualisierte Frau. Man stellt ja auch keine Statue eines gefesselten Afroamerikaners vor eine Migrationsbehörde oder eines Auschwitz-Gefangenen vor eine Synagoge.“

Hier zeigt sich nicht nur die deutliche Polemik, die die Figur evozierte, sondern ebenfalls die offensichtlich zum Problem gewordene Vieldeutigkeit. Denn der Kommentar versteht die Figur einerseits als sexualisierende und objektifizierende Materialisierung eines zu skandalisierenden Frauenbildes (das sprachlich mit den konstruierten Vergleichen zur Migrationsbehörde und zu Ausschwitz noch einmal strategisch verschärft wird), andererseits gesteht der Kommentar der Figur durchaus auch das Potenzial einer anderen Lesart als „Mahnmal“ zu.

Ein weiterer Diskursstrang adressiert sozusagen das als problematisch empfundene Verfahren und verweist gleichermaßen auf die nicht stattgefundene Qualitätssicherung bezüglich Kunst im öffentlichen Raum: „mir macht nicht nur Angst, dass solche Darstellungen von Gremien akzeptiert und gefördert werden [...], sondern dass es sich hier einfach um ganz kitschige und schlechte Kunst handelt. Solche kitschigen Holzfiguren gibt es hier in der Region viele und das ist nicht schön. Es gibt so viele tolle Künstler_innen, schade, dass hier nicht die Chance ergriffen wurde, gute Kunst zu zeigen“ („NoComment“).

In der Folge überschlugen sich die Wogen: Die *Badische Zeitung* berichtete kontinuierlich. Am 24. Juni veröffentlichte sie eine ganze Seite mit Leser*innenbriefen, in denen sich die Argumente mit den oben kurz skizzierten Linien weitestgehend deckten: Von einer kleinkarierten und antiquierten Diskussion war da zu lesen, vom Kampf um Toleranz und künstlerischer Freiheit, auf der anderen Seite aber auch von Entrüstung und Entsetzen, von einem Fehlgriff, von der Verhunzung des öffentlichen Raums. In den deutschen Wikipedia-Eintrag zum Lorettobad fand dieses Argument ebenfalls Eingang: Diesmal aber als Qualifizierung einer Protestaktion vom 18. Juni, in der Unbekannte die Skulptur mit schwarzem Klebeband umwickelten und rote Karten gegen Sexismus daran anbrachten; der Wikipedia-Eintrag bewertet deutlich: „... aus Protest verunstaltet“.

Der Bildhauer selbst bezog verschiedentlich Stellung – auch in einem ausführlichen Text auf seiner Homepage. Es entspräche nicht seiner Vorstellung von Kunst, „Werke nur nach allgemeiner Gefälligkeit zu schaffen“, wird Rees etwa in der *Badischen Zeitung* zitiert (Disch 2021). Mit dem Kunstwerk, das er auf Ovids *Metamorphosen* bezog, habe er genau das Gegenteil der Kritik aussagen wollen: Die dargestellte Nymphe Syrinx würde in seiner Interpretation über den „Lüstling“ und „Stalker Pan“ siegen. Die Stadt wiederum zog ihre eigenen Schlüsse und debattierte intensiv über die Rolle der städtischen Kunstkommission, die hier übergangen worden sei. Eine Freiburger Kunsthistorikerin und Mitglied dieser Kommission

betonte, es sei ein Problem, wenn zunehmend günstige (und damit schlechte) Kunstwerke im städtischen Raum auftauchten, die nicht offiziell autorisiert worden seien. Der Vorsitzende des Fördervereins bot seinen Rücktritt an. Die Skulptur selbst wurde Anfang Juli abgebaut und laut Medienberichterstattung an einen Unternehmer aus dem Raum Stuttgart verkauft.

Für mich eignet sich dieses Fallbeispiel in geradezu beispielhafter Weise dazu, die Lesarten der Kulturanalyse zu verdeutlichen: Es ist einzubetten in einen Diskurs, der seit einigen Monaten unter dem Label „Cancel Culture" firmiert; ein Diskurs, in dem von ganz unterschiedlicher Seite die Grenzen des Sag- und Darstellbaren kontrovers und mitunter höchst ideologisch verhandelt werden und der immer auch mit dem Argument der Zensur operiert. Das Fallbeispiel zeigt, wie wirkmächtig die kulturelle Kodierung eines Raums ist, der wie im Fall des Damenbads in Freiburg Lesarten eines Kunstwerks problematisierbar werden lässt, die an anderen Stellen so wohl gar nicht erst zu einem Konflikt geführt hätten. Es verdeutlicht für mich ebenfalls, wie Argumentationslinien ideologisch aufgeladen und wie sie unentwirrbar ineinander verschränkt sind (etwa der Vorwurf des Sexismus mit ästhetischen Werturteilen). Und dabei wäre dieses Fallbeispiel erst noch in eine städtische Textur einzuordnen, in der sich an vielerlei Stellen Konflikte um Deutungshoheiten manifestieren, in denen der Ton der Auseinandersetzung – so meine Beobachtung – deutlich rauher, polemischer, ideologischer und radikaler wird oder in denen die städtische Kulturpolitik Entscheidungen trifft, die kaum vermittelt und in einen produktiven Dialog überführt werden. So wurde, um nur ein Beispiel von vielen zu nennen, in Freiburg die Bronzebüste des Antisemiten Alban Stolz aus dem öffentlichen Raum verbannt, ohne dass der Denkmalort selbst weiterhin markiert würde – man mag es als Ironie oder geschichtsvergessene Inkonsequenz bewerten, dass das Denkmal nicht etwa seinen Weg in ein Museumsdepot fand, sondern im Garten des Collegium Borromäum, dem Priesterseminar der Erzdiözese Freiburg, wieder aufgestellt wurde. Auch für die Loretta (wenngleich beide Fälle nicht gänzlich vergleichbar sind) hätte sich durchaus angeboten, die Kontroverse selbst weiterhin sichtbar zu machen. Als Kulturanthropologe hätte ich hier wohl empfohlen, in beiden Fällen Orte der kulturellen Bildung einzurichten, die den Diskurs nicht beenden, sondern ihn in kulturdidaktischer Art und Weise weiterspinnen. Auch hätte man die nachvollziehbaren Anliegen der Kritiker*innen der Skulptur ernst nehmen können, indem man den öffentlichen Raum in Freiburg einmal grundsätzlicher nach Orten der sicht- oder unsichtbaren Diskriminierung befragt hätte; und hier hätte ich dann auch noch einmal auf die Diskriminierung der muslimischen Frauen vor einigen Jahren kritisch-reflexiv hingewiesen. Dies hätte auch die Chance geboten, die Lesarten der Skulptur in ihrer Komplexität und die Kritik in ihren ideologischen oder ideologisierten Punkten einzuordnen. Denn es ging eben nicht nur um Geschmack und um Sexismus, sondern auch um Fragen der machtvollen Repräsentation. Und solche – und die Reaktionen darauf – sind eben immer Indikatoren gesellschaftlicher Transformationsprozesse, die Kulturwissenschaftler*innen hellhörig werden lassen.

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Tabellarische Schweizer Reisenotizen einer/s unbekannten britischen Touristin/en

Bernhard Tschofen

Lektüren sind wichtig. Sie gehen uns – wie man salopp sagen würde – etwas an, zumal sie sich in einer kulturanthropologischen oder folkloristischen Perspektive nicht auf Bücher oder Essays beschränken müssen. Allerdings lässt sich nicht jedes Stück Schrift (oder Kultur) einfach lesen – und zwar ganz ohne theoretische Kritik an der Denkfigur von ‚Kultur als Text', sondern schlicht, weil es sich uns nicht erschließt und wir aufgrund mangelnden Wissens über Urheber, Kontext und Funktion seiner Logik nur annäherungsweise auf die Spur kommen.

Um ein solches Fundstück soll es hier gehen. Es ist in jeder Hinsicht uneindeutig und als Praxis oder Genre wenig einordenbar. Es beginnt damit, dass die Autorschaft unbekannt ist und sich auch über den engeren Bezug zum Fundort nur Mutmaßungen anstellen lassen. Doch auch dieser ist nicht ohne Relevanz. Es handelt sich um ein Buch, das allerdings hier bewusst nicht im Vordergrund stehen, sondern nur kurz zur Ausleuchtung des, oder besser: eines, möglichen Kontexts vorgestellt werden soll. Der hier eingeschlagene Zugang zielt weniger auf den Text der Literatur als auf Materialität und Gebrauch – eine Perspektive, die, dem generellen Interesse an der Sinnlichkeit von Wissen und Handeln folgend, in den vergangenen Jahren verstärkt kulturwissenschaftliche und anthropologische Frage- und Arbeitsweisen an die Beschäftigung mit Literatur herangetragen hat.

Im Zentrum dieses Beitrags steht eine auf zwei Seiten des Vorsatzes eines Buches eingeklebte grafisch-tabellarische Reisechronik, die durch collagenartige Illustrationen ergänzt wird. Wir könnten so etwas als materielle Aneignungspraxis

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einordnen, als eine Art Marginalie, die nicht den Kern des Buches verändert und Seitenränder nützt, sondern das Buch als Objekt gestaltet und in ihm eine Benutzeroberfläche hinterlässt, die als Spur eines individuellen Gebrauchs zu lesen ist. Das Buch, um das es sich handelt, ist eine Ausgabe der zweiten Auflage (1907) von *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands*, einem in erster Auflage 1892 erschienenen literarischen Gemälde des seit 1877 mehrheitlich in Davos ansässigen englischen Schriftstellers und Renaissanceforschers John Addington Symonds (1840–1893) und seiner Tochter Margaret (1869–1925). Jemand muss das Buch vier Jahrzehnte später als eine Art Reiseführer für einen eigenen längeren Aufenthalt in Davos, Graubünden und der Schweiz genützt haben – einen Aufenthalt, der auf den beiden eingefügten Seiten tabellarisch dokumentiert und in Text und Bild kommentiert ist. Weitere Dokumente – Bilder aus Prospekten, handschriftliche Vermerke und annotierte Landkarten der Schweiz und engeren Region – finden sich im Vor- und Nachsatz des Bandes. Über die Urheberin oder den Urheber dieser Bearbeitungen ist nichts bekannt, das Buch enthält kein Exlibris und keinen Namenseintrag. Ich bin 2014 über den internationalen Antiquariatshandel an die von einem Händler in Selkirk, Scottish Borders Council, angebotene Ausgabe gelangt – naturgemäß ohne zu wissen, welche Überraschungen mich darin erwarten.

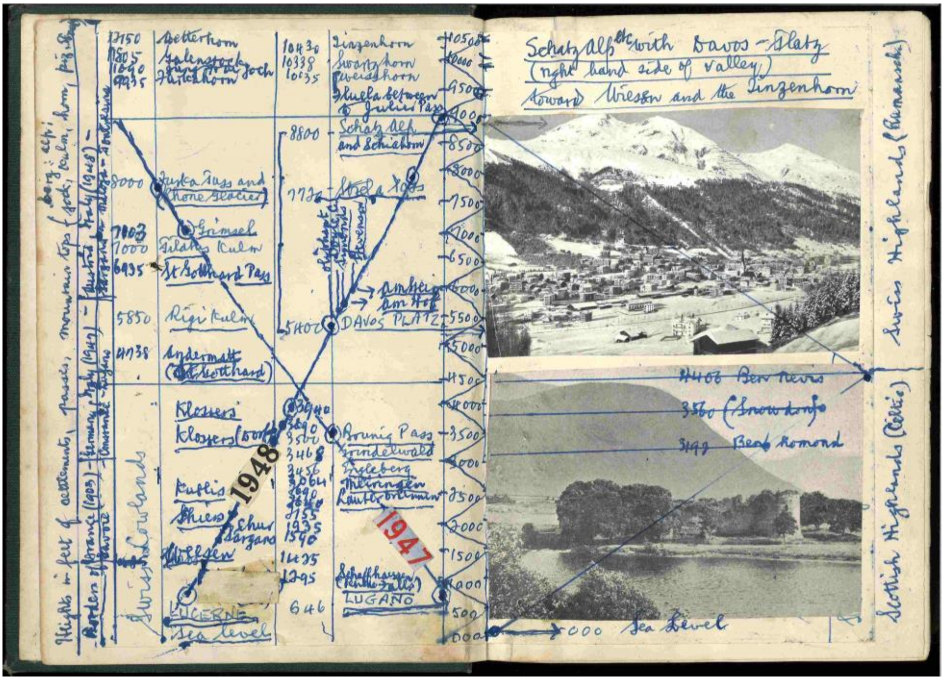


Abb. 1: Die Vorsatzseiten in dem hier besprochenen Exemplar von John A. und Margaret Symonds, *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1907)

Our Life in the Swiss Highlands ist eine liebevoll mit zwanzig Veduten des englischen Malers John Hardwicke Lewis (1840–1927) ausgestattete Sammlung von teils bereits früher an verschiedenen Orten publizierten Schilderungen von Land und Leuten in und um Davos. Die mit dem Widmungsvermerk „To Mother“ versehene, bei Adam and Charles Black in London verlegte zweite Auflage wurde vierzehn Jahre nach dem Tod ihres Vaters von Margaret Symonds (so firmiert sie in der Titelei) besorgt. Gegenüber der schlichten ersten Ausgabe von 1892 hat die Auflage von 1907 einen hübschen Jugendstildekor erhalten, ein goldgeprägtes Schweizerkreuz ziert stolz ihren Buchrücken. Margaret steuerte dem Band – nun als Margaret Vaughan, wie sie seit der Heirat 1898 mit dem britischen Pädagogen und Collegelehrer William Wyamar Vaughan hieß – auch ein ausführliches Vorwort bei, in dem sie nicht nur die Umstände der Entstehung und das Leben der Familie Symonds in Davos skizziert, sondern die zeitgenössischen Leser*innen auch auf die rasanten Veränderungen des Ortes in den zurückliegenden dreissig Jahren hinweist und zugleich ein wenig das für diese Veränderungen vor allem verantwortliche internationale Milieu dieser Hochzeit der Höhenkur auferstehen lässt. Auch ihr Vater John Addington hatte in einem ursprünglich bereits nach dem ersten Winter seines Aufenthalts verfassten und den Anfang des Bandes machenden Essay „Davos in Winter“ die Anfänge und Grundlagen der Höhenkur ausführlich beschrieben und den Aufschwung von Davos aus der eigenen Erfahrung skizziert: „Under my eyes the village has become a town“, fügte er später in einem Postscript hinzu – eine Entwicklung, die viel mit den literarischen und publizistischen Stimmen zu tun hat, die den Ruf der Gegend und der heilenden Wirkung ihres Klimas in die Welt hinausgetragen haben. Seine 1881 mit der Familie bezogene Landhausvilla ‚Am Hof‘ war ein Zentrum der Davoser Kolonie gebildeter Fremder, und Symonds gilt unter anderem mit seinen Initiativen zu internationalen Schlittenrennen bis heute auch als Pionier des Wintersports in Graubünden (Sprecher 1995: 26–27) und als Vater des ‚Davoser‘, des bis heute in der Schweiz meistverbreiteten Schlittentyps.

Our Life in the Swiss Highlands beschränkt sich nicht auf die Perspektive der Kur, sondern behandelt in seinen Kapiteln – ergänzt um „Vignettes in Prose and Verse“ – ein breites Spektrum an Themen. Es reicht von seriös belegten und von gelehrten ethnografischen Beobachtungen durchzogenen Darstellungen zur Geschichte der Region über ausführliche Abhandlungen von Naturphänomenen, Schnee und Lawinen, Schilderungen von Ausflügen in die nähere und fernere Umgebung und Hommagen an Sport und Weingenuss bis zu einer Reihe von überwiegend von Margaret Symonds gezeichneten stark erlebnismäßig geprägten Berichten. Dazu zählen etwa Texte über das Heuziehen im Winter und die eindrucksvolle Schilderung der Erlebnisse einer Schlittenfahrt auf dem Silvrettagletscher. Sie geben auch eine Ahnung von den Freiheiten, die der langjährige Aufenthalt in Graubünden der viktorianischen Bildungselite gewährte. Das gilt vor allem auch in sexueller Beziehung: John Addington Symonds’ Flucht in die Bündner Berge war

nicht nur der Erkrankung an Tuberkulose geschuldet, sondern auch Vorwürfen der Pädophilie, denen er sich als junger Erzieher ausgesetzt sah. Er hat später sowohl als Renaissanceforscher als auch dank seiner Essays zur griechischen und zeitgenössischen Ethik als früher Theoretiker und Vorkämpfer der gleichgeschlechtlichen Liebe Bedeutung erlangt. Die Beschäftigung mit der Renaissance und ausgedehnte Reisen aus Graubünden nach Italien gewährten ihm dafür auch persönlich größere Freiheiten. Seine Tochter Margaret gehörte später zum Kreis um Virgina Woolf, deren Cousin William W. Vaughan 1898 ihr Ehemann wurde, und mit der sie selbst eine Affäre unterhielt. Sie wurde vor allem als Verfasserin von historischen Romanen und einer lange als grundlegend geltenden Geschichte der Stadt Perugia Bedeutung bekannt. Ihre autobiografisch geprägte und wohl auch von Johanna Spyris Erfolgen inspirierte literarische Bearbeitung des Themas der gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen im Alpenraum aus der Sicht einer zwischen Kunst und Landleben changierenden Kindheit *A Child of the Alps* (1920) harrt noch der Entdeckung.

Urheber*in der mit dem Band verbundenen Collagen und Marginalien ist vermutlich eine um 1947/48 bereits im fortgeschrittenen Alter befindliche Person aus der britischen, vermutlich schottischen Bildungselite. Vielleicht hat sie das Buch schon lange besessen, jedenfalls hat sie eine nicht mehr jung anmutende Handschrift und verweist – recht eindeutig – auf bereits 1903 unternommene Reisen nach Europa und in die Alpen. Es ist also gut möglich, dass das Buch bereits bald nach dieser ersten Reise erworben worden und Jahrzehnte später nochmals zum Einsatz gekommen ist. Wie die Symonds hält sich die oder der Urheber*in dieser Aneignungen vornehmlich in Davos auf, die Lektüren der Essays des Bandes werden also einen längeren Aufenthalt begleitet haben und scheinen mit ihren Schilderungen von Orten und Merkwürdigkeiten auch Reiserouten und Touren beeinflusst zu haben.

Das doppelseitige Blatt ist von einer Zweiteilung geprägt, in eine tabellarische linke und die vor allem von den beiden Fotodrucken und zugehörigen Legenden dominierte rechte Seite. Verbunden sind die beiden Seiten von einer als Maßstab fungierenden Höhenskala, auf der in Schritten von 500 Fuß die Höhen zwischen „Sea Level" und den Dreitausendern der Berner und Rätischen Alpen vermerkt sind. Von ihr ausgehend markieren Vektoren die Beziehungen zu den Bildern rechts und zur Tabelle links mit ihren zusätzlich auf einer Zeitachse verknüpften zahllosen Einträgen besuchter Orte und Berge. Die schmalen Spalten ganz links enthalten Hinweise zur Legende und Terminologie („Heights in feet of settlements, passes, mountain tops …") sowie eine Übersicht zum Kontext der Aufenthalte des Autors oder der Autorin in der Schweiz. Vermerkt sind hier für 1903, 1947 und 1948 andere europäische Länder und Regionen sowie (vermutlich) die Grenzübertrittsorte beim Eintritt in die Schweiz aus den verschiedenen Nachbarländern. Die beiden breiteren Spalten des mit blauer Tinte gezogenen und beschrifteten Tabellenrasters enthalten nach Höhe geordnet von unten nach oben die Namen der bereisten Orte. Sie werden links und mittig von schmaleren Spalten mit Höhenangaben begleitet, wobei sich die linke Tabelle bis zu einer mit 4500 (Fuß) markierten Höhe mit dem

pauschalen Hinweis „Swiss Lowlands“ begnügt. Interessanterweise scheinen sich die beiden Tabellen auf dieser Höhe zu überkreuzen, zwei diagonale Graphen mit Markierungen einzelner Punkte zeigen das an. Auffällig sind die vielleicht aus einem Kalender ausgeschnittenen und auf diesen Vektoren durch Raum und Zeit angebrachten gedruckten Jahreszahlen 1948 (schwarz) und 1947 (rot). Die hier primär dokumentierten Reisen führten demnach einmal vornehmlich von Lugano ins Berner Oberland, in die Zentralschweiz und Gotthardregion, das andere Mal von Luzern ins Prättigau und nach Davos. Die sehr viel feinere Auflösung dieser Achse – nahezu alle Orte liegen auf recht engem Raum – und die zusätzlichen Vermerke der mit Davos verbundenen großen Namen wie (Arthur Conan) Doyle, (Robert Luis) Stevenson und eben (John Addington) Symonds lassen auf die literarischen Interessen schließen, die den oder die Urheber*in bei seiner Spurensuche im Bündner Oberland geleitet haben. Dagegen markiert eine weitere horizontale Unterteilung, bis zu welchen Höhen er oder sie selbst gekommen ist („8800 – Schatzalp“) und welche Berge nur gesehen respektive zur Orientierung vermerkt worden sind („10430 – Tinzenhorn“ etc.). Weitere Aufschlüsse bietet eine ähnliche, aber mehr als Liste der besuchten Orte und Besichtigungen angelegte Zusammenstellung auf drei Seiten im Nachsatz des Bandes.

Die rechte Seite des Blattes wird von zwei, vermutlich aus Prospekten oder anderen Druckwerken ausgeschnittenen fotografischen Ansichten gleichen Formats (ca. 8.5x12.7 cm, was in etwa dem historischen Normalformat für Postkarten entspricht) dominiert. Diese sind gleichwohl durch horizontale und diagonale Linien mit den Angaben der rechten Seite verbunden. Es handelt sich um eine winterliche Ansicht von Davos-Platz mit dem Blick auf die Schatzalp und das Tinzenhorn (oben) und von Old Iverlochy Castle mit dem Ben Nevis. Dessen Höhe („4407“) ist mit denen anderer Erhebungen des Schottischen Hochlands vermerkt und mit der Tabelle links verbunden. Die beiden Abbildungen sind zudem – als Entsprechung zur Angabe „Swiss Lowlands“ ganz links – in der rechten Randspalte räumlich und auch semantisch (um nicht zu sagen ethnisch) verortet: „Scottish Highlands (Celtic)“ und „Swiss Highlands (Rumansch)“.

Was verleitet Reisende zu einer solchen Art der Darstellung ihrer Erfahrungen? Und handelt es sich dabei um ein bereits unterwegs angelegtes respektive in die mitgenommene Lektüre – und Anleitung – eingetragenes Aufschreibesystem oder doch um eine post festum festgehaltene Dokumentation. Der synoptische Charakter der drei, primär aber der beiden späteren Reisen lässt Letzteres vermuten. Sicher fungierte dieses Raum, Zeit und Erleben verbindende Wissensmedium als Gedächtnisstütze. In seiner eigenlogischen Anmutung und mit seinem in eigenwilliger Materialität festgehaltenen Wissen gibt es zugleich einen komprimierten Einblick in das für das touristische Erleben elementare Wechselspiel von eigener Erfahrung und medial gerahmtem Wissen und Wahrnehmen. Es stellt Beziehungen zwischen Räumen und Erfahrungswelten her und gibt uns – auch wenn es anonym bleibt und uns daher manche Dimension verborgen bleiben muss – noch

Jahrzehnte nach seiner Entstehung Einblicke in die sehr persönliche Aneignung eines Raums und der mit ihm verbundenen Geschichten.

Ich hatte den Band einige Jahre lang weitgehend unbeachtet in meinem Regal stehen, weil ich zur Zeit seines Erwerbs primär an einem Kapitel interessiert war, das ich in Übersetzung in eine Anthologie aufgenommen habe. Irgendwann, Jahre später, habe ich den Band mit einer schwachen Erinnerung an den bearbeiteten Vorsatz wieder zur Hand genommen, als ich an einem Beitrag über Alpenreisen und die mediale Rahmung des Naturerlebens arbeitete. Von da an begleitete er mich – zunächst vor allem als Rätsel, das immer wieder nach Betrachtung verlangte, dann aber immer intensiver als erhellendes Dokument eines quasi heterodoxen Raumwissens. In der Literatur zu Egodokumenten, privaten Aufschreibesystemen und subjektiven Kartografien bin ich nirgendwo Vergleichbarem begegnet. Seine Einordnung fällt mir bis heute schwer, und vielleicht ist es auch gut, wenn dermaßen Schillerndes nicht einfach in diese oder jene Schublade gerät. In seiner Verknüpfung von Raum und Zeit aus der Erfahrung einer oder eines augenscheinlich hochgebildeten britischen Reisenden und in seiner tabellenartigen Montage textlicher und bildlicher Elemente ist es ohne Zweifel ein kulturell situiertes und damit hochgradig eigenlogisches Wissensmedium. Zugleich ließ es mich aber auch ein Stück weit erkennen, dass die globalen Verflechtungsgeschichten der Alpenbegeisterung – wie hier zwischen Davos und Großbritannien – keine abstrakten Beziehungen darstellen. Sowohl ihren Ausgang als auch ihre Resonanz nehmen und finden sie immer im sinnlich-emotionalen Erleben der Reisenden.

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Ayça Damgacı and Tümay Göktepe, *Patrida*

Meltem Türköz

Created and directed by Ayça Damgacı (b. 1973) and Tümay Göktepe (b. 1972), the documentary film *Patrida* focuses on a Turkish woman's relationship with her father, and their journey retracing, in reverse, the forced migration route that the father took seventy-one years ago. The late Ismet Damgacı and Ayça Damgacı are the protagonists; wife and mother, Müşerref Damgacı, is a supportive presence. The camera follows the three as they set out from Istanbul to Ismet's birthplace in Greece, then move on to Zurich, where he spent the first sixteen years of his life. By the end of the film, we have learned accounts of what Ismet omitted from the migration story he told his family and are free to reflect on memory, displacement, and the overlapping terrains of families and nations. The film was developed over two years with support and funding from Eurasia Doc, Anadolu Kültür's Yeni Film Fund, the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, CNC, and other funding sources. Ayça Damgacı, a stage and television actor, wrote the voiceover while her co-director and partner Tümay Göktepe edited the film.

Ayça Damgacı grew up knowing that her father was born in Western Thrace, in the town of Xanthi (Iskeçe), that he spent part of his life in Switzerland, and that he and his family migrated to Turkey in 1947. Family stories of provenance are set in locations in Western Thrace, including Salonica, which has a mythical significance as much for the family as for modern Turkey because it is the birthplace of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the country's founder. In addition to an upbringing by a father who was proud of his European (rather than Anatolian) Turkish descent, Ayça and her younger sister also had mandatory German language classes and memorized and sang German songs for as long as they remember.

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Redaction is inevitable in the intergenerational transmission of family stories, just as in sanitized folktales and in myths of nations. In grainy Super 8 footage of the Damgacı family on holiday, we see little Ayça in an amusement park climbing a ladder to touch a replica of the earth twice her size. This image of dimension is one of the tropes of the unfolding story: for example, Ayça mentions that her father was once the whole world, but here she is presented taking him by the hand as he once took hers. The camera then switches to images of Ayça's hands sorting through informal family archives: piles of documents and photos, including black-and-white close-ups of a carefree and young Ismet laughing and jesting to the camera. Ayça's voice:

> This is where I come from, the country where family secrets—untold histories—are hidden away in closets, where despite this, where people talk only of good things, but go insane from unhappiness. In this house where I allegedly spread my roots, I always sort through the same dresser. [Here are] title deeds, bank account booklets, old identification cards, and the cheery German melodies I was taught. Now, in the autumn of our shared life, a journey—to your past, and a little bit, to mine. Will a journey help us understand our violence, fury, and fears? I am what they used to call a White Turk, who has grown up in an ugly concrete neighborhood. Or am I really? And, who, father, are you? (voiceover).

Ayça mulls over the ascribed term, *Beyaz Türk*—White Turk—an umbrella label in circulation since the 1990s to describe a portion of the cultural elite in Turkey privileged from their proximity to Kemalist reforms, and in this case confers this status by geographic proximity to the nation's founder, Atatürk, who was from Salonica. Ayça questions the label of White Turk often rolling her eyes at her father, who claims himself, and thus his family, as a more civilized, "European" Turk as opposed to "Islamic" or "Anatolian."

In a series of conversations set in destinations dotting Ismet Damgacı's migration path, we learn of the omitted kernel at the center of his migration story. Ismet's father, Mustafa Sait, was an expert in the processes of curing and blending tobacco and a foreman (*ustabaşı*) in a warehouse in Xanthi, a center of tobacco production in the early twentieth century (Rentetzi 2008: 64). In 1931, when Ismet is only nine months old, Mustafa Sait is selected by his boss, Philippe, to oversee production at a company named Sullana, in Zurich. We see black and white images of baby Ismet in his mother's arms on the eve of the departure to Switzerland, and then an image of Ismet as a schoolboy in Zurich. A third image is of the young Mustafa Sait, posing among bales of tobacco in a factory workshop in Zurich. Thus begins Ismet's life as a child of Switzerland, where his sister, Yıldız, is born and where the two siblings grow up in the only home country they would know during their most formative years.

The daily exposure to tobacco, which Mustafa Sait ingests through his pores as well as his lungs, makes him gravely ill. Buerger's disease, creating blood clots in the

arteries in the arms and legs, incapacitates him. This devastating illness with its psychological toll is not the only blow to the family. The company terminates Mustafa Sait's employment, and despite many attempts to waive the decision, the family is deported in 1947, placed on a train bound for Milan, then Athens, where they wait for a month for a boat to Istanbul. This is the portion of the story Ismet kept from the rest of the family: the illness, the rupture of the family's life in Zurich, and the trauma and shame of deportation on unjust legal grounds. Neither Ismet nor his younger sister is of legal age, so they have no standing to petition for the family to remain in Switzerland. The family must depart to a "homeland" they have never known.

The words homeland and birthplace carry weighty connotations and provoke strong reactions. We see elderly Ismet's eyes beam as he disembarks from the train at Xanthi and has his first look at the birthplace he knows only through his mother's stories. Walking around Xanthi, the family peers into the windows of an abandoned tobacco warehouse, sniffing the pungent aroma still oozing from the walls. A local passer-by learns from Ayça, who speaks to him in Greek, that this is her father's birthplace and responds with a gesture of patting his own chest: "Patrida! Patrida!" Fatherland, the place that makes so many humans draw in their breath and stand tall.

Tension and humor pervade candid family interactions on the visit to Salonica, the birthplace of Atatürk, whose house is a museum displaying mundane but revered relics: shoes, items of clothing, and accessories that belonged to the leader, as well as a larger-than-life wax statue. Seated on a bench, the family gazes at this wax likeness and Ismet breaks the silence to comment, "doesn't [Atatürk] look so much like cousin [so and so]."—"Nonsense!" says his wife Müşerref, one of the few words she utters in the film.

Ismet is cautious of European border guards, and suspicious of migrant men milling about in a Salonica public square. His daughter Ayça urges him not to forget that he, too underwent an enforced migration in 1947. The father and mother's wariness of migrant strangers stands in contrast to Ayça's curiosity and her willful engagement with them. She launches into a Kurdish folk song with men from Iraqi Kurdistan on the seafront in Salonica. The men are *peshmerga* fighters from the city of Dohuk and seeking a life without war. "ISIS is finished," they say, and they do not want to be engaged in a regional conflict. All along the journey we are witness to groups of migrant men from Southeast Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East who are riding trains or milling about in public squares only a few out of hundreds of thousands crossing borders for better lives. Each migrant's story is unique, and one wonders how each of those families will one day transmit the stories of their journeys.

Ismet shows his family around during their visit to Zurich and reunites with one of his former classmates. Visiting a classroom, he reverts to childlike behavior, raising his hands to volunteer an answer to an imaginary teacher, while his friend recites lines from Brecht. When Ayça asks her father why he did not share the part

of his life story about the deportation from Switzerland he replies that he "wanted to share good things" and claims he would have eventually shared the story when the time was right.

Viewing and "reading" *Patrida* dovetailed with the waves of Covid-19 pandemic in 2021. On my first viewing of *Patrida*, I was overwhelmed with emotion, at the interactions unfolding along the Damgacı family journey and thinking of stories my late father and mother might have told me over time. Listening to Ayça's ambivalence towards her heritage took me back to my experience of the demystification of Turkishness and the revelation of secrets of ethnic origins in Turkish families. It is commonplace now for Turkish Muslim families to discover that their background includes non-Muslim ethnicities. While some families or family members embrace the discovery and allow it to be shared, others bury it further, having been raised to despise their other, previously unknown ethnic self. Ayça described how the film had in in one sense been informed by alternative histories of Turkish identities, Armenians, Greeks, Jews and Kurds, and took a closer look at acribed categories of belonging. My own paternal family carries the surname Türköz meaning "authentically Turkish;" but a note about an orphan, convert great grandfather penciled into a family tree points at the violent heritage of Elaziğ province, which had a sizeable Armenian population before 1915. My paternal grandmother's story, also an orphan, a child bride, remains untold. Through the Damgacı family's story, I was led back to my own, awaiting more excavation and creative shaping.

Stories that cover up family misfortune or shame are similar to stories that cover up other collective pasts: silenced by trauma and fear, or denial, these are grafted on to an element of the true story. In an insightful article on the link between state and family secrets, Molly Pulda invites us to think about the "structures of secrecy" (Pulda 2012: 481) upon which families, and nations are built, arguing that family [secrets] and state secrets are alike in "their 'mechanics of disclosure' or formal properties of revelation" (472). In making the revelation of an untold family story an inspiration for their documentary, Ayça Damgacı and Tümay Göktepe invite us into an intimate geography of a family's migration history.

Scale and density are important aspects of how people perceive outflows of migration. As human beings move across borders, spill into the sea, run after cargo planes on a tarmac, or even wash ashore dead, they are perceived as foils to measure empathy or inaction, or an ugly reality to ignore. In the summer of 2021, another child walked across Turkey and into Europe to reach a desired destination: Little Amal, a three-and-a-half-meter-tall giant puppet built by the Handspring Puppet Company and Good Chance Theatre, animated by four puppeteers. Originally a character in a play performed in Calais in 2015, Amal was developed further into a giant puppet. Little Amal's journey began in Gaziantep, where I was to facilitate a narrative workshop with Syrian and Turkish women at Kırkayak Cultural Center. On the night that Amal's walk began, she set out from the narrow streets of Gaziantep emerging onto a hill on the edge of the city's historical fortress.

Hundreds of children, most of them Syrian refugees, were there in various states of great excitement. Seated next to an orchestra playing Syrian and Turkish songs, Amal reached for the children who touched her hand and danced with her. This was only the first stage of her 8,000 km journey across Europe to raise awareness of child refugees.

The next morning, an influential local columnist known for his anti-refugee stances, cited "local opinion" to say that the event had been met with suspicion because Syrians seemed to be gathering in too much of an organized manner. The governor cancelled the rest of the public activities involving Little Amal, including our event, which would have been held in a public park. The density of Syrians, even around an artistic event that drew mostly children, fell upon an atmosphere strained by intense anti-migrant rhetoric on social media outlets. The next day we held our event on the terrace of the Kırkayak Cultural Center, where workshop participant Syrian women offered Amal stories of comfort and courage. On an outdoor terrace, without Amal, but with The Walk film crew present, the participating women presented their storybook, and performed their tales of protagonists who respected nature, overcame childhood trauma, were kind with strangers, and who outwitted evil. As I write, Little Amal continues her walk, from Greece, to Italy, to France, and finally in November, to Manchester, England, a symbolic, enacted walk drawing support from local NGOs. Little Amal is singular, representing male and female children. Though the events organized around her are welcoming and collaborative, the empathy she needs is missing from the countries where she walks. Amal's emergence in Gaziantep was intended as a way to celebrate Turkish-Syrian collaboration but the placement of the walk in a part of the city most local residents would avoid at night resulted in a vastly unequal proportion of Syrian families being present. Though Amal's walk through these old streets looked good for an audience in Europe, on a local level, in Greece, she was seen by some as a "Muslim doll," ambling through "sacred Orthodox space" and residents expressed fear that generating more empathy would encourage more refugees. As Little Amal and her crew retrace the steps of many refugees, particularly children, across Europe, within local, collaborative artistic festivals, the question of how to bridge differences, let alone defuse animosities, remains.

Viewing *Patrida* came with my first meaningful social connections after a long winter of isolation. The pandemic had turned many daily interpersonal communicative forms into relics of normality. In the pandemic rearview mirror, arbitrary interactions and social practices swelled in importance with the distance of loss. Engaging with Little Amal and the crowds she drew was the first large-scale event in which I participated, cherishing the (masked) opportunity to conduct a narrative workshop and experience the effervescence of the joyful and chaotic crowd. What I have found in Gaziantep as well as in Istanbul is that NGO professionals who have first-hand contact with the poor and with refugee populations benefit from reflexive exercises to scaffold the processing of their work. Folkore, ethnology and cultural anthropology scholars trained in narrative

methodology, in the ethics of field research and representation, sensitized to listening, are in a good position to contribute to a deeper human exchange structure around those who are displaced.

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Philippe Descola, “Human Natures”

Ülo Valk

Philippe Descola is a leading French anthropologist, one of the initiators of the ontological turn, who has studied the native cultures of Amazonia and discussed major theoretical questions of different epistemological regimes. His *magnum opus* is *Beyond Nature and Culture* (2014) but the short article “Human Natures” serves as a handy introduction to his main ideas. In this brief essay I will discuss how Descola’s work is related to folkloristics and how current folkloristic methodology can complement some debates in ontological anthropology.

As Regina Bendix has shown, the search for “authenticity” gained ground in the intellectual climate of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe (1997). Romanticism inspired interest and admiration for the largely unknown oral traditions of the peasantry living in close contact with nature. The Enlightenment supported scientific thinking, Eurocentrism, industrialization, technological innovation, and urbanization—all the big changes that shifted the world away from the “little traditions” of peasant communities which seemingly had no future. The fundamental binary oppositions of modernism—object and subject, nature and culture, material world and society—are entangled with these dominant ideologies that shaped the humanities. One of the distinctive features of this new discipline was interest in language and languages as the basic condition of humanity. Prominent intellectuals, such as Johann Gottfried von Herder, Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, and Max Müller had a role to play in establishing the tenet that language is the main instrument of thinking and communication. Hence, philology appeared as a valid method to study remote cultures.

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The colonized world of the nineteenth century displayed a rich variety of languages and cultures, and amazing differences between "primitive peoples," supposedly still living like Stone-Age cave men, and civilized Westerners. Philippe Descola's short article serves as an excellent introduction to the predicaments of modernist approaches, and to animism and naturalism as two distinct ontologies. Peoples with animist thinking "endow plants, animals, and other elements of their physical environment with a subjectivity of their own," and believe that non-humans "possess social characteristics" (Descola 2011: 19). For them, nature and society are inextricably linked. The naturalist thinking of Westerners is hardly compatible with the egalitarian and holistic outlook of animists. Naturalism presumes a major split between nature and humanity, and only the latter is endowed with subjectivity and sociability. Whereas our bodily substance is "natural," comparable with the genetic structure of animals, insects, and other living creatures, our consciousness, morals, and language make us humans unique. Hence, there is a hidden conflict between our physically determined animality and culturally shaped humanity. As Descola shows, "human nature" in Western culture is an oxymoron, but makes more sense in non-Western traditionalist ontologies, where there is no division between humans and nature because they share similar psychological dispositions.

Fortunately, Descola not only theorizes on different ontological regimes, but also offers some empirical examples. He starts his article with a story, recorded at the beginning of the twentieth century by a missionary, Father Emile Kemlin, who lived among the Reungao people in central Vietnam (Descola 2011: 11–12). The story is about a woman named Oih, who saved a tiger, who had a bone stuck in his throat. Later the women dreamed of the tiger and agreed to enter a kind of father–daughter relationship with him. From then on, the thankful tiger started to provide meat—wild boar, deer, or roe—to Oih. Descola sees the story as a typical case of ascribing "human-like behavior to animals and plants," as shared by many peoples of the world. As he notes, such events as the one that happened to Oih, "are said to take place nowadays, not in a distant mythical past" (12), which leads us to think that for the Reungaos it must be a true story. In addition, Descola designates narratives such as the one about Oih as vaguely an "anecdote" (11). And this is the point where the folkloristic and anthropological perspectives diverge. Years ago Alan Dundes criticized Claude Lévi-Strauss for his "appalling ignorance" because he failed to make a distinction between basic folk narrative genres such as myth, folktale, and legend (1997). Does the same problem of overlooking the differences between genres continue in French anthropology? And does it matter?

Anecdotes in folkloristics generally means "personal legends" (Brunvand 1998: 216) —narratives about famous or locally known individuals. Anecdote as a genre category means that the story is claimed to be true but does not necessarily have a factual grounding. Hence, even if the story about Oih was told as a true story to Father Kemlin, Descola with his use of genre terminology undermines its truth value. Discrepancy and mismatch between analytical and ethnic genre categories is

one of the major challenges of post-colonial folkloristics, but there is another epistemological problem regarding the beautiful story of Oih's friendship with the tiger. Descola criticizes the symbolic and metaphoric rendering of such stories, although animist peoples "know perfectly well the difference between a figurative and a literal statement" (2011: 13). But how can we read the minds of individuals whom we have never met, and who are separated from us by a huge cultural and temporal gap? Is it a good idea to accept stories just as stories, as discursive expressions without considering their possible symbolism, poetics, and the cognitive discord between fact and fiction? Why do we suppose that stories about animals who talk or behave like humans express genuine belief, if they are told by "indigenous" peoples? As they often live in a close relationship with nature, they should know the animals and their habits better than we do. Why do we think that human-like animals in Western folklore belong to a fantasy world? True, some scholars have interpreted such folk tales as "survivals" from the pre-historic and pre-rational age. For example, according to John MacCulloch, "the talking animals in all folk-tales descend from an age when it was one of the commonplaces of thought and belief that animals did and could talk, and were, in effect, nothing but men and women in animal shape" (1905: 38).

Recently, as several times before, I read the Estonian adaptation of the Grimms' fairy tale the "The Town Musicians of Bremen" to my 10-year old daughter Laura and to our cat Murri, who both listened attentively. This is one of Laura's favourite stories and she often has observations that we discuss together. The other day she asked, why the donkey, dog, cat, and rooster are called the town musicians of Bremen, even though they never reached Bremen. Another evening we found a photo in Wikipedia of the statue of the town musicians in Bremen as evidence that they are famous in Bremen. Isn't it a tradition in Western culture to dedicate monuments to historical figures? And then we discussed another remarkable element in the tale: the fact that all the animals and the rooster can talk among themselves, but the humans—their former masters and the robbers—do not understand their language. Why? Our cat could have explained this, but remained silent.

What I want to say here is that epistemological questions, how we understand the storyworld in relationship to lived reality, are far from simple. Animals belong to both worlds. Making a distinction between humor, factuality, and fiction is sometimes both impossible and irrelevant. On other occasions such judgments about veracity can be of the utmost importance, because stories can affect our decisions and the steps we take in real life. Therefore, discussion about belief, disbelief, factuality, and fiction does matter, it should not be simplified in scholarship, even though there is a lot of uncertainty about stories, utterances, and words—the subtle material that we use for building shared realities. Folklorists are provided with skills and tools for a thorough analysis of verbal expressivity and cognitive modalities that we call genres—frames and modes of communication and thought. Likewise, we are provided with knowledge of what to do with stories—

how to analyze them, make sense of them and how to see their connections with intertexts, related genres, and narrating situations. We need to share this knowledge with our neighboring disciplines, even though mutual understanding is often not easy. I remember participating in an anthropological conference about the cultures and ethnic identities of North East India where I gave a paper on the mythic narratives that outline the vernacular geographies and place-lore of the Assamese people. In the subsequent discussions one of the social anthropologists expressed his disappointment that I paid too much attention to stories, whereas it was important to study social facts—whatever that means. At another conference on the study of religion, I was asked why I complicate matters and differentiate between oral narrative genres. Wouldn't it be much easier just to talk about "narratives" and "discourses"? Aren't these analytical tools sufficient to discuss the stories that people share? I do not think so. What is at stake is our scholarly endeavor to reach a more nuanced understanding of peoples, expressive modalities, and worldviews. We should bypass neither epistemic complications in the field, nor the complexities of multi-dimensional and ambiguous modes of expression. The colonial template of the supremacy of scientific over magical thought can be as misleading as can belief in major differences between the ways Westerners and the "indigenous" peoples think and speak. Why do we assume that their world is uniform and their stories are straightforward and simple? Are we still looking for "authentic" worldviews that have not been contaminated by modernity?

Fortunately, according to Descola the picture is not so black and white, the great divide between Us and Them is not as big as often imagined, and Descola's critical reflectivity of the ontological regimes that he outlines—of animism, totemism, analogism, and naturalism—make his works thought-provoking. His works encourage us to look for non-modernist ontologies not only among "exotic" peoples but also among ourselves. Last summer I made interviews in Estonia with some hobby archaeologists and nature guides whose relationship with earth, water, wind, and the whole living world can be characterized as personal, even intimate. I heard them reflecting on their encounters with the powers of nature that sounded utterly animist. It is impossible to find a wind deity in traditional Estonian folklore, but it appears that today wind has acquired agency and perhaps even personhood in vernacular belief. In the personal experience stories of hobby archaeologists wind ceased to be a simple atmospheric phenomenon or a discursive element in daily weather forecasts, as we usually know it. A sudden gust of wind could have intentionality and carry personal messages, such as warning or even a threat, particularly in extraordinary moments when people encounter something ineffable—the supernatural or otherworldly.

Descola's work has enabled me to think of animism as an integral part of contemporary Western thinking. Talking animals appear in European fairy-tales, literature, and films, and it is not surprising that new research is emerging today on the communication between animals, birds, insects, and even plants. Modernity built several boundaries—between the Westerners and indigenous peoples, and

between nature and humanity. It turned natural environment into a material resource to be exploited, but today the graveness of this mistake is becoming clear to everyone. Response of the abused and wounded nature cannot be ignored. And yet it makes sense to keep asking questions—about factuality and fiction, plain speech and metaphors, truth and imagination, both among ourselves and among other peoples. The others might not be so different from us at all, and the imaginary boundaries between the disciplines, such as folkloristics and anthropology, can easily be overcome. Yet, thinking of differences in thinking makes sense.

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The Cave Episode from Japan's Mythical History

Francisco Vaz da Silva

First, cocks crowed; then there was singing and rhythmic thumping. Riotous laughter exploded in the night. It sounded like a predawn party, but how could that be? No dawn was expected, nor was there cause for mirth. Since the sun had gone into hiding, constant night reigned; the distressed cries of the myriad deities were abundant like summer flies, and calamities were rife. Yet, despite all the doom and gloom, something cheerful was at hand. She opened a chink in the rock, peeped out, and asked why there was cheering. The deities rejoice, she was told, because a deity greater than the sun goddess was among them. Frankly puzzled now, she pushed aside the bolder that blocked the entry to the cave, came out cautiously, and watched. There was, indeed, this brilliant lady standing before her—a dazzling person very much like herself, really. She also saw the cause of all the mirth: a spirited deity, who *had bared her breasts and exposed her genitals, danced quite entranced—and stomped her feet rhythmically*—on an upturned tub. Amaterasu, ever more puzzled, came forth to get a better view. Quickly, someone blocked the entry to the cave; there was no retreat now. Sunlight was restored to the world, days and nights resumed their rounds. There was cause for joy and laughter.

A folklorist hypothetically recording the proceedings outside the heavenly cave where Amaterasu, the Japanese Sun goddess, once retreated might have come up with some background notes. She would have certainly mentioned that the 800 myriad *kami*, alarmed at Amaterasu's eclipse, plotted a plan to bring the sunlight back into the world. First they caused cocks to crow, then they hung long strings of beads, a mirror, and offering strips from the branches of a flourishing *sakaki* tree, uprooted from a heavenly mountain, which they placed in front of the cave as an

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offering. (The ancestor folklorist would probably go ahead and note that the sakaki tree, *Cleyera japonica*, is an evergreen, and its name is written with ideographs meaning "wisdom tree," "hill tree," and "kami tree.") And then, most spectacularly, Uzume kindled fires, overturned a bucket and started dancing on it, and "she became divinely possessed, exposed her breasts, and pushed her skirt-band down to her genitals" (Philippi 1992: 84). This performance elicited hearty laugher from the assembled kami. As Amaterasu peeked out, the deity she saw, supposedly superior to herself, was in fact her own image (enhanced by the sparkling of myriad beads) in the mirror.

Assiduously paying attention to fairy tales made me realize that mirrors in folklore are often linked to spirits and tend to show hidden essences rather than appearances. That is why, for instance, a beautiful princess sought by a prince—who distressingly finds her in a hideous guise—encourages him to look at her true form in a mirror (Grimm 197, "The Chrystal Ball"). But two and a half decades ago, for better or worse, I hadn't been to fairy-tale school yet. I then felt like a brother-in-arms to Roland Barthes as he looked to Japan for "the possibility of a difference, of a mutation, of a revolution in the propriety of symbolic systems" (Barthes 1989: 3–4). Fired up by the stark otherness of Japanese traditional representations, I spent feverish months trying to get a hold on the inner logic of many stories preserved in two eighth-century collections of traditions about the origin of Japan and its mythical history, the *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters) and the *Nihongi (Chronicles of Japan)*. The cave episode didn't particularly strike me at the time. It took a recent look at how the scene appears in *ukiyo-e* woodblock print art, the jolt of it, to prompt this discussion. The following thoughts are poised between very old texts and more recent images; I probe the common ground between heterogeneous depictions of the cave scene to understand its linchpin: Uzume and the laughter she rouses.

That Amaterasu was shown to herself in the beads-adorned mirror is interesting. The same word, *tama,* designates beads and "spirit." And Amaterasu herself explains, as she bestows the beads and the mirror to her descendant who will institute worship and government on earth, that the mirror is "my spirit" (Philippi 1992: 140). Indeed, these beads and this mirror (along with a sword wrought from the tail of an eight-forked serpent at a later time by Amaterasu's brother Susanō-o), are among the three sacred regalia of the Emperor invested with the Sun deity's spirit. The point is that the "kami tree," decked with the mirror and the beads, contained the essence of Amaterasu—and it was offered to Amaterasu. Amaterasu was drawn out by her ritual double; symbolically speaking, Amaterasu was lured out by herself.

What about Uzume? Was she, like the mirror (and the) tree, Amaterasu's ritual double in this scene? Certainly she provoked the laughter, the cause of which, she reported, is a kami superior to Amaterasu. Was Uzume, then, the superior kami she talked about?



Fig. 1: "Origin of Music and Dance at the Rock Door." Woodblock print, signed Shunsai Toshimasa. 19th century. From Wikipedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amaterasu_cave.JPG (accessed May 25, 2021).

Consider a nineteenth-century woodblock print that conveys the uproar of the laughing kami (Fig. 1). Uzume's dance takes center stage, and the entranced dancer is flanked by the cock and the sakaki tree bearing the mirror, as expected. However, Uzume wears the string of beads that the old texts hang on the tree. What is more, the flowers in her right hand look like sakaki flowers. The overall suggestion is that Uzume and the tree share one role. The association between Uzume and the tree is not without precedent in the ancient texts. One tradition in *Nihongi* states that Uzume made herself a headdress with sakaki greenery (Aston 1972: 44). More significant perhaps, the link between the tree and the dancer is intelligible once you recall that the tree is a kami tree, and the dancer is kami possessed (*kamigakari*). Which kami, then? The answer is self-evident. That Uzume wears the beads whereas the sakaki holds the mirror recalls that their shared function is to lure Amaterasu out of the cave. That is, indeed, the crux of the story. Another textual variant boils down the deities' plan to the decision of making an image of Amaterasu and praying to it (46–47). In this instance, both Uzume and the tree get subsumed in the Amaterasu image. Yet another variant (Chamberlain 1981: 64) states that Uzume's headdress is made of spindle-tree leaves, *Euonymus planipes*. These leaves turn to crimson-to-ruby red in autumn and glow brightly in the dark season—as though Uzume shone with a solar halo in the dark. Add to this that Uzume "kindled fires" before she started dancing (Aston 1972: 44), a detail usually emphasized in *ukiyo-e* images. Having laid out these convergences, I dare state the obvious: in the woodblock print image, Uzume is dressed like Amaterasu—she looks like the active version of the collected deity.

Acknowledging that Uzume is indeed Amaterasu's ritual double makes it possible to explain a couple other details not in the texts. Uzume in the image holds a sword in her right hand. Although one textual variant claims that she "took in her hand a spear wreathed with Eulalia grass" (Aston 1972, 44), none that I know mentions a sword. Also, the circular plate at the center of Uzume's necklace of beads is unexpected in light of the texts. But consider that the circular plate is a passable allusion to the circular mirror, and that the sword matches the third article in the sacred imperial regalia. Allow that Uzume wears allusions to the sacred regalia, and all the chips fall into place. This makes sense because Amaterasu herself can be seen holding the sacred regalia, as befits the ancestress of the imperial lineage. Consider another woodblock print signed Toyokuni III (Fig. 2). In this scene Amaterasu wears the regalia at the cave's door, and she stares at her own semblance in both the mirror and Uzume.



Fig. 2: Amaterasu Leaving the Cave (left half), signed Toyokuni III. Edo period (1603 to 1868). ©Fundação Oriente-Museu do Oriente/Hugo Maertens, with permission.

Fig. 2 was, incidentally, the trigger for the present query. It prompted this question: why does Uzume (portrayed here in a courtly and composed mode) appear so eerily similar to the sun deity? Answering the question entails first understanding what the sun eclipse is about, and then asking what the connection may be between eroticism and laughter (associated with Uzume) and the sun (impersonated by Amaterasu).

A modicum of background context is required here. At the beginning of the world, Izanagi and his sister Izanami united sexually to create the islands and the kami of Japan. Unfortunately, the birth of the fire kami burned Izanami's genitals and she passed away to *Yōmi*, the realm of the dead. Izanagi tried to rescue her, but he broke a taboo and saw her putrid body. Therefore, he had to flee Yōmi and blocked the exit with a boulder. The couple split—Izanami, henceforth the great kami of Yōmi, sends people to their graves whereas Izanagi propitiates new births. Izanagi then proceeded to divest himself from the impurities contracted in Yōmi. From washing his left eye Amaterasu came into being; from the right eye, the lunar Tsukuyomi; and washing a lower, murkier place—the nose mucus—created Susanō-o, a willful troublemaker associated with storms. Izanagi bestowed celestial ruling on Amaterasu and passed to her his own tama necklace; then he destined Tsukuyomi to rule the night; and he assigned to Susanō-o the realm of the oceans. But from the start Susanō-o wept and howled relentlessly. His weeping "caused the verdant mountains to wither and all the rivers and seas to dry up. At this, the cries of malevolent deities were everywhere abundant like summer flies; and all sorts of calamities arose in all things" (Philippi 1992: 72). The weeper raged because he longed to join his mother Izanami in Yōmi; therefore, Izanagi ordered him to settle in the netherworld. But first Susanō-o visited his sister in heaven. There he destroyed the rice fields, voided his excrement in the hall of first fruits, and even managed to soil his sister. To cap it all, Susanō-o hurled a backward-flayed colt into the sacred weaving hall. As a consequence, the heavenly weaver stroke her genitals against the shuttle and died (80). Other variants state that Amaterasu herself is the weaver who wounded herself with the shuttle (Aston 1972: 41), or else her junior version, Young-Sun-Maiden, wounded herself and passed away (45). Anyway, Amaterasu hid in the cave, and the alternation of days and nights came to and end. Now "the cries of the myriad deities were everywhere abundant, like summer flies; and all manner of calamities arose" (Philippi 1992: 81). In this dire situation, the deities devised a plan to get Amaterasu back into the world.

Amaterasu emerges overall as a successor to Izanagi, whose tama she received, whereas Susanō-o aligns with Izanami the ruler of Yōmi. He unleashed in heaven the impurity characteristic of the underworld, and he led Amaterasu (or a transparent surrogate) to pass away, after which everlasting night prevailed along with calamities otherwise associated with Susanō-o's wailing. Important to note, Amaterasu's retreat into the cave after wounding her genitals recalls Izanami's previous passing into Yōmi after burning her genitals. In this regard Amaterasu is in continuity with her mother. The full import of Amaterasu's eclipse is that it repeats Izanami's original death, with a twist. In the first round Izanami became the ruler of Yōmi, but Izanagi exited the underworld and carried on with creation. In the second round Amaterasu died like Izanami, yet she must exit the cave like Izanagi in order to protect the living. The point is that Amaterasu must be brought from the clutches of death, yet the sun is required to elicit life from death (which is why Amaterasu must be brought back in the first place). In slightly different terms:

only the power of Amaterasu could bring Amaterasu back from death. Some moderns would call this a catch-22 situation. The ancient Japanese came up with Uzume's ritual act instead.

Step back and look at the cosmic drama. Susanō-o's weeping and howling correlate with eclipse and death, whereas laughter and erotism correlate with sunlight and life. This is a recurring symbolic code. Vladimir Propp, taking a welcome stride to overcome "formalist comparativism" (Propp 1984: 128), noted that in folklore worldwide the "laughing threshold" sets apart the realms of death and life. For this reason, coming into life—and bringing life forth—often happens to the sound of laughter (133). Because the sun promotes vegetable life, it is "connected with laughter" (137). And because generating life is at stake, laughing and "the singing of obscene songs, the ritual use of obscenities (aeschrology), and gestures of exposing oneself" while sowing, plowing, and planting are equivalent acts (138–9). When Demeter laughs spring returns to the earth, Propp remarked, and he cited the Japanese parallel: Amaterasu "reappeared and the earth became light again after Uzume, the goddess of joy, danced obscene dances in front of her" (139).

Strip away the literary niceties—the psychodrama of Amaterasu's sulking, curiosity, and final persuasion to come out—and the raw ritual efficacy of the cosmic drama stands out. Given the sun's demise, it takes solar allomotifs—as Alan Dundes might say—to bring the sun back. Uzume is Amaterasu's mirror image insofar as she enacts solar allomotifs. She is (temporarily) a greater kami in that she rescues the sun deity. In the ancient drama there is no catch-22—there is confidence in the life-bringing power of Eros, in the unshackling charm of laughter.

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James Agee and Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

Thomas Walker

During the summer before graduate school, I assembled a reading list that included Richard Dorson's *Folklore and Folklife*, Stith Thompson's *The Folktale*, and James Agee and Walker Evans' *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. These books introduced me to the study of folklore and ethnography, to vernacular expression and genres of representation, to empirical and phenomenological methods of study, and to the mysteries, intimacies, responsibilities, and possibilities of fieldwork. Of course, Dorson and Thompson were standard bearers, assigned for classes—studied, analyzed, discussed. *Famous Men* was never the subject of formal study, but it has loomed in my imagination as to what fieldwork might be—precisely because its essential instruction was to keep open the question of how, and for whom, the observation and study of people produces value and meaning. Although folklorists and other scholars have wrangled with this text and helped to make the ethnographic structures, values, and premises of *Famous Men* more transparent, its epistemology and the imagined and real asymmetries of power, privilege, and representation it opens, and which I have encountered in fieldwork, have remained somewhat mystified—unexamined and unfinished.

James Agee and Walker Evans were not strictly speaking ethnographers, nor anthropologists or sociologists, but their work expanded and enriched the canvas of democratic American vistas in the 1930s and problematized at the same time the realist ideology undergirding the burgeoning documentary industry of the period. Evans was a photographer and was on assignment from the Resettlement

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Administration (superseded by the Farm Security Administration) to work with Agee, a staff writer with *Fortune* Magazine. In 1936, amid the collapse of capitalism and as part of an ambitious and sweeping program to document American life from sea to shining sea (Works Progress Administration), including dispossessed Americans and other peoples spread out across diverse landscapes and cultural histories, Agee and Evans were among the corps of "culture workers" assigned to introduce America to Americans.

In Agee's interpretation, their purpose was to "recognize the stature of a portion of unimagined existence," and their method would be to "contrive techniques proper to its recording, communication, analysis, and defense." Their subject would be the lives and conditions of white sharecroppers in the American south, and they came to dub themselves factitiously as "spy" (Agee) and "counter-spy" (Evans). Far from being spies in the practice of the art of dissembling, their purported intention would be to produce an "exhaustive" record and analysis, "with no detail, no matter how trivial it may seem, left untouched, no relevancy avoided which lies within the power of remembrance to maintain, of the intelligence to perceive, and of the spirit to persist in" (xiv–xv). With these intentions and purposes, Agee was forthright about their work being "merely portent and fragment, experiment, dissonant prologue" and forewarned their reader that "since it [their work] is intended, among other things, as a swindle, an insult, and a corrective, the reader will be wise to bear the nominal subject, and his expectation of its proper treatment, steadily in mind." Furthermore, Agee avers that he and Evans were committed to the same standard of practice and that ultimately the serious treatment of their subject supersedes their expertise or egos as "journalists, sociologists, politicians, entertainers, humanitarians, priests, or artists."

The main body of the text of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* begins—after Evans' photographs, and after pages of epigraphs, assorted paratext, and a preface—in Book Two. From there Agee lays out their project's stance vis-à-vis their subject, their implied reader, and interests of their employers and the institutions they represent. From the outset, and repeatedly, we are drawn into the complex web of imaginaries and realities of representation which set the stage for the entire story—the book, its production, the experience it enfolds, the representations it embeds. The opening statement captures Agee's breathless exasperation, building in intensity around the tension of titillation and abeyances in his purported curiosity. The prose points, however, toward a thoroughgoing indictment of the project through successive charges: firstly, of the publishing enterprise; secondly, of its dubiously qualified minions; thirdly, of its implication of complicity expected from, and acknowledged by, Agee and Evans as participants. Ultimately, the paragraph's seamless layers of curiosity form an indictment of participant observation as practice (7–8):

> First:
> It seems to me curious, not to say obscene and thoroughly terrifying, that it could occur to an association of human beings drawn together through need and chance and for profit into a company, an organ of journalism, to pry intimately into the lives of an undefended and appallingly damaged group of human beings, an ignorant and helpless rural family, for the purpose of parading the nakedness, disadvantage and humiliation of these lives before another group of human beings, in the name of science, of "honest journalism" (whatever that paradox may mean), of humanity, of social fearlessness, for money, and for a reputation for crusading and for unbias which, when skillfully enough qualified, is exchangeable at any bank for money (and in politics, for votes, job patronage, abelincolnism, etc.); …
>
> Second:
> … and that these people could be capable of meditating this prospect without the slightest doubt of their qualification to do an "honest" piece of work, and with a conscience better than clear, and in the virtual certitude of almost unanimous public approval.
>
> Third:
> It seems curious, further, that the assignment of this work should have fallen to persons having so extremely different a form of respect for the subject, and responsibility toward it, that from the first and inevitably they counted their employers, and that Government likewise to which one of them was bonded, among their most dangerous enemies, acted as spies, guardians, and cheats, and trusted no judgment, however authoritative it claimed to be, save their own: which in many aspects of the task before them was untrained and uninformed. It seems further curious that realizing the extreme corruptness and difficulty of the circumstances, and the unlikelihood of achieving in any untainted form what they wished to achieve, they accepted the work in the first place. And it seems curious still further that, with all their suspicion of and contempt for every person and thing to do with the situation, save only for the tenants and for themselves, and their own intentions, and with all their realization of the seriousness and mystery of the subject, and of the human responsibility they undertook, they so little questioned or doubted their own qualifications for this work. All of this, I repeat, seems to me curious, obscene, terrifying, and unfathomably mysterious.

In the flurry of documentary production in the 1930s, realist expression exploited familiar and invented new forms of representation and engagement. Modernist discourse and its aesthetic surfaced in Agee's writing as he struggled to find his voice and reconcile intellect, emotion, and intuition. He invokes James Joyce and alludes to other modernists by name and sensibility ("Fish halted on the middle and serene

of blind sea water sleeping lidless lensed”), and locates himself in a discursive space occupied by “avant-garde artists experimenting with the language, images, and styles of mass culture, and mass culture appropriating the techniques of ‘advanced’ artists” (Allred 2010b, 41). Agee and Evans may have been working within “received genres,” but they, like other artists of their time, “embed[ed] themselves within the institutions that create[ed] these materials and modes” ending up creating something different. These artists were “boring from within,” according to Jeff Allred (2010b: 42), borrowing a phrase from the radical culture of the period to characterize strategies of institutional change, including espionage and subtler or passive forms of subversion, that originates within those institutional structures. *Time*, Inc., the parent company of *Fortune* Magazine, was a key player in what might be termed the corporate-cultural-industrial complex.

In *Famous Men* the problems and purported failures of representation are confounded by Agee’s disavowal and denial that his writing was art (“Above all else: in God’s name don’t think of it as Art”), his persistence with a method of journalistic intrusion he disdained, his claim that “nothing I might write could make any difference whatsoever,” and his violation of documentary’s principle of authorial distance. These are utterly disabling conditions, contradictions that undermine the book’s authority, at the same time, and ironically, proving Agee’s point that he is an unreliable narrator and an undisciplined ethnographer who can barely be depended upon to describe usefully the lives and circumstances of the tenant cotton farmers he studies (Staub 1988, 152), not to mention maintain personal boundaries with his subjects and suppress his erotic fantasies about them.

Despite the compassion and humanity throughout *Famous Men*, Agee’s agency in veering into the style of writing that produced *Famous Men* instead of what his editor at *Fortune* expected, often seems stifled and inarticulate. There is a sense of deferral in the breathless prose, and the occasional, protective calm in descriptions of the families at sleep extend a conceit, familiar also from radical culture in the 1930s, of the somnolence of the oppressed masses waiting only to awaken from their oppression. At the same time, sleep and images of sleep offer respite from the grinding, daily cycle of poverty and exhaustion, creating a kind of benevolent relief, a spiritual enfolding, and a dimension missing from the often sterile prose of social science writing (19–20):

> Most human beings, most animals and birds who live in the sheltering ring of human influence, and a great portion of all the branched tribes of living in earth and air and water upon a half of the world, were stunned with sleep … Bone and bone, blood and blood, life and life disjointed and abandoned they lay graven in so final depth, that dreams attend them seemed not plausible. Fish halted on the middle and serene of blind sea water sleeping lidless lensed; their breathing, their sleeping subsistence, the effortless nursing of ignorant plants; entirely silenced, sleepers, delicate planets, insects,

> cherished in amber, mured in night, autumn of action, sorrow's short winter, water-hole where gather the weak wild beasts; night; night: sleep; sleep.

To be sure, *Famous Men* achieves some higher truths in its corrective to representational structures and realities than might be effected through photography and writing. Even masquerading as social science, its impetus and intuition to effect change through exposé and long-form journalism was evident in perhaps the same way it was in another popular text in my education, Zora Neal Hurston's *Mules and Men*. Although Agee was an established writer with *Fortune*, the assignment foundered in the field on his humiliation at the moral injustice he felt, of bearing witness to it, and being powerless to change the dehumanizing poverty exacerbated by the visceral experiences of class and racism. Ultimately the entire project collapsed under the weight of its impossible responsibility of representation, its uncertain and obscene purpose, its heartless swindle, its hopeless agency—all forms of subversion and deferral—and whatever manuscript he submitted for review was ultimately and infamously rejected as useless. *Famous Men*, published four years later, itself lay dormant until its resurgence after Agee's death among a new and admiring readership in the 1960s. In more a recent appraisal, Allred (2010a: 96) says that a now common approach to *Famous Men* is to "laud the text, and its authors, for the strenuousness and self-awareness of the attempt, such that the text gains value and authority precisely for its foregrounding of its own aesthetic and ethical failures."

In 2010 a typescript surfaced from Agee's collected papers entitled *Cotton Tenants* that was thought to be the rejected manuscript for *Fortune*. It was finally published in 2013 and hews closer to ethnography in focusing on familiar, quotidian categories of description—shelter, food, clothing, work, leisure, education, health, etc.—along with finely detailed description of social relations, working conditions, and the workings of credit and debt at the core of tenant farming. Adam Haslett who wrote a short preface to the new publication (2013: 18–19) characterized the descriptions as matter-of-fact and declarative, but noted that a "page rarely goes by without at some point rising into a higher, poetic register," making the "quotidian epic."

Haslett culls from this resurfaced artifact Agee's persistently relevant insight that "structures of intuition"—akin to Raymond Williams' more famous term "structures of feeling"—enables us to understand how something abstract like economics or capitalism works and manifests in daily life. The "structures of intuition" are precisely those "daily modes of being, the fears and aspirations that allow [systems of debt peonage] to continue, that permit dehumanization to be perceived as natural law." Agee's apprehension of the laws of capitalism at work in the American south of 1936 when he and Evans arrived in Alabama still seem palpable today even though sharecropping ended in the 1940s. The "shared intuition of white supremacy," Haslett extracts from Agee's analysis, is the feudal relationship of social deference that maintains the economic indebtedness. It works because someone, in this case, black farmers, are always seen to be worse off. One scene in *Famous Men* involving a group of young black men summoned by their

landlord to sing spirituals for Agee and Evans famously illustrates this dynamic. "During all this singing," Agee writes, "I had been sick in the knowledge that they felt they were here at our demand, mine and Walker's, and that I could communicate nothing otherwise; and now, in a perversion of self-torture, I played my part through" (1941: 31). In my innocent reading of *Famous Men* many years ago, it was perhaps this field encounter Agee and Evans described that I immediately identified as folklore and took to be relevant to my studies, but over the years my own experiences with fieldwork have pressed me to confront in myself and others similar anxieties and endemic issues of privilege and ignorance, power and knowledge, grace and humility.

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The present book is a special gift for a special colleague and friend. Defined as an Unfestschrift, it gives colleagues, students, and friends of Regina Bendix an opportunity to express their esteem for Regina's inspiration, cooperation, leadership, and friendship in an adequate and lasting manner. The title of the present book, *Reading Matters*, is as close as possible to an English equivalent of the beautiful German double entendre *Erlesenes* (meaning both "something read/a reading" and "something exquisite"). Presenting "matters for reading," the Unfestschrift unites short contributions about "readings" that "mattered" in some way or another for the contributors, readings that had an impact on their understanding of whatever they were at some time or presently are interested in. The term "readings" is understood widely. Since most of the invited contributors are academics, the term implies, in the first place, readings of an academic or scholarly nature. In a wider notion, however, "readings" also refer to any other piece of literature, the perception of a piece of art (a painting, a sculpture, a performance), listening to music, appreciating a "folkloric" performance or a fieldwork experience, or just anything else whose "reading" or individual perception has been meaningful for the contributors in different ways. Contrary to a strictly scholarly treatment of a given topic in which the author often disappears behind the subject, the presentations unveil and highlight the contributor's personal involvement, and thus a dimension of crucial importance for ethnographers such as the dedicatee.

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